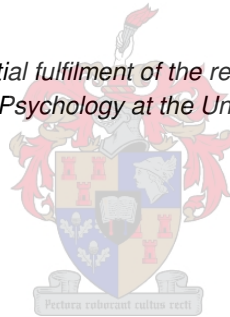


**EVALUATION OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY INTER-INSTITUTIONAL MODULE FOCUSING ON
COMMUNITY, SELF AND IDENTITY**

by
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*Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Science in Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch*



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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis/dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

March 2011

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ABSTRACT

To equip students in the health professions with the necessary skill to work effectively in a diverse society, a joint research-education project was launched by Stellenbosch University and the University of the Western Cape. Over a period of three years, fourth-year psychology, occupational therapy and social work students from the different institutions met for workshops and interacted on a web based platform. In small workgroups they conversed around community, self and identity and the module was named Community, Self and Identity (CSI).

While the programme was evaluated at the end of each year, no follow-up study had been done to assess the effect of the module over time. In fact, very few follow-up evaluations of course curricula have been done. This current study aims to fill this gap, by evaluating the CSI module; one to three years after the participants had completed it.

Based on social justice education principles, this study used a web based survey with quantitative as well as qualitative questions, in order to get a more complete picture of students' experience of the module. This study also aims to determine whether the module changed students' perception of community and identity.

The sample of 23 participants was for the most very positive about the module, indicating that they would definitely recommend it to other students. Most of the sample also reported that their perception of the concepts of community and identity were expanded due to the CSI module.

Despite the small sample size and corresponding low response rate, this study has important implications for future course evaluations and social justice studies.

OPSOMMING

Om studente in gesondheidsberoep met die nodige vaardighede toe te rus om effektief in 'n diverse samelewing te werk, is 'n gesamentlike navorsing en onderrig projek deur die Universiteit Stellenbosch en die Universiteit van Weskaapland geloods. Oor 'n tydperk van drie jaar het vierdejaar sielkunde-, arbeidsterapie- en maatskaplike werkstudente van die verskillende instellings saam aan werkswinkels deelgeneem en deur middel van 'n web-gebaseerde platform gekommunikeer. Hulle het in klein groepies omgegaan rondom gemeenskap, self en identiteit en dus is die betrokke module Community, Self and Identity (CSI) (Gemeenskap, Self en Identiteit) genoem.

Alhoewel die program aan die einde van die aanbieding elke jaar geëvalueer is, is geen opvolg studie nog gedoen om effek van die module oor tyd beoordeel nie. In werklikheid is weinig opvolgevalueringstudies van kursus kurrikula nog gedoen. Hierdie huidige studie beoog om die leemte te vul, deur die CSI module, een tot drie jaar na deelnemers dit voltooi het, te evalueer.

Hierdie studie, wat op beginsels van sosiale geregtigheidsonderrig gebaseer is, gebruik 'n web-gebaseerde meningsopname met kwantitatiewe sowel as kwalitatiewe vrae, om sodoende 'n meer volledige indruk van studente se ervaring van die module te kry. Die studie mik ook om vas te stel of die module studente se persepsie van gemeenskap en identiteit verander het.

Die steekproef van 23 deelnemers was oor die algemeen hoogs positief oor die module en het aangedui dat hul dit verseker by ander studente sal aanbeveel. Die meerderheid van die steekproef het ook gerapporteer dat hul persepsie van gemeenskap en identiteit uitgebrei is as gevolg van die CSI module.

Ten spyte van die klein steekproefgrootte en ooreenstemmende lae respons, hou hierdie studie belangrike implikasies vir toekomstige kursusevalueringstudies en sosiale geregtigheidsstudies in.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Community, Self and Identity

Between 2006 and 2008, for three consecutive years, Stellenbosch University (SU) and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) presented a teaching-research project in collaboration. It was a module where the content covered the concepts of community and identity within a community psychology framework. Hence, it was named “Community, Self and Identity” (the CSI module).

This module was presented to fourth-year social work students from UWC and psychology honours students from SU over a period of six weeks in the first year. In the second and third years of the project, the fourth-year occupational therapy students from UWC also joined. The module consisted of two or three daylong workshops, with group discussions that were performed using a web-based platform between the meetings. The platform was designed so that the course reading material and different chat groups could be hosted there. During the course of the module students also had to complete written assignments and submit them via this platform.

Students were assigned to small groups, where all the disciplines and thus both institutions were represented. In these groups, students worked together and shared information about themselves at the workshops and in the online chat groups. These discussions were facilitated by an online facilitator. The group work culminated in a group presentation at the last contact session.

Sharing activities at the workshops were based on participatory action learning (PAL) techniques which included students’ drawing and then discussing “community maps” and their “river of life” representation, giving a representation of each student’s community, called a community map, as well as detailing some main events in each student’s past. During these contact sessions, the course coordinators and guest speakers gave lectures on topics related to community, self and identity. The final presentation was an opportunity for groups to convey what they had learned in the course, from the group work, discussions, lectures and reading material.

The universities took turns hosting the workshops, with students spending one day at the one institution and one or two days at the other.

This teaching-research collaboration is unusual. It is one of the first such modules that was presented to students from different disciplines within the helping profession and at different institutions. It focused on community and identity, with an element of diversity, because of the demographic composition of the students, the different higher education institutions and their different historical placement. The universities have very different histories with Stellenbosch students still being predominantly white and UWC students

predominantly black. Thus, the students taking part also differed in terms of race, home language, age and social class.

The CSI module was designed to give students the opportunity to interact across various dimensions of difference. It created a diverse, multidisciplinary, inter-institutional experience.

At the end of each year's module, the coordinators asked for feedback and evaluated the module. There have also been various publications based on this research and findings of this module (Bozalek, Rohleder, Carolissen, Leibowitz, Nicholls & Swartz, 2007; Leibowitz, Rohleder, Bozalek, Carolissen & Swartz, 2007; Rohleder, Fish, Ismail, Padfield & Platen, 2007; Rohleder, Bozalek, Carolissen, Leibowitz & Swartz, 2008; Rohleder Swartz, Bozalek, Carolissen & Leibowitz, 2008; Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, Bozalek & Leibowitz, 2008; Swartz et al., 2009).

1.2 Motivation for the study

During the first evaluation, students responded positively to the CSI module (Bozalek et al., 2007). Even though there were problems and the module was challenging (Swartz et al., 2009), they reported that it was a meaningful learning experience. They reported that they learned a lot from cooperating across the dimensions of difference (Rohleder, Swartz, Bozalek, et al., 2008).

One of the aims of education is to prepare students for practice (Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). With a module like this one, it was not certain whether students felt that it added to their preparation for the real working environment. This was part of the motivation for the study: to determine whether students believed that the module had developed skills that were useful in their working environments and helped them prepare for the variety of difference that they would encounter there (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, et al., 2008).

Further motivation for this particular study was the fact very few modules similar to the CSI module have been presented. Furthermore, while immediate post-programme evaluation is the norm, very few follow-up studies have been conducted to evaluate the effect of a module like this one some time after its conclusion (Kernahan & Davis, 2007). This study was done within a social justice education framework, which requires transformation (Freire, 2000) that is deep-seated and sincere, instead of superficial changes based on using language that appears transformational (Mayo, 2005). This would also imply a long-term change in behaviour, instead of instantaneous adjustments.

Furthermore, after a stimulating module has been completed, students may have a different opinion of it. There are no more course grades, which could influence response bias. Opportunities for participants to apply the skills gained in such a module might also influence a student's opinion of it. Thus, questions regarding the usefulness of the CSI module to the working health professional as well as the general lack of follow-up evaluation studies of modules dealing with difference, serve as motivation for this study.

1.3 Aims of the study

This study set out to evaluate the CSI module further, looking at students' current environment and their current perception of the module. It intended to examine whether their current environment was diverse at all, whether the students had confidence in their ability to deal with difference and whether they felt the CSI module contributed to this. This study examined students' experience of the module, focussing on their opinion of its value to them.

Because the module also dealt with theory regarding the concepts community and identity (Rohleder, Swartz, Bozalek, et al., 2008), this study also examined whether students felt that their perception of these concepts had changed as a result of the module. Both concepts are generally defined in very narrow, static terms. The CSI module exposed students to experiences that encouraged re-thinking of these concepts, to form broad and flexible conceptions of identity and community (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, et al., 2008).

Thus, this study aimed to examine students' experience of the CSI module and whether their own definitions of community and identity have changed as a result of the CSI module.

1.4 Difference

Race is, next to gender, probably the most contested aspect of difference in South Africa, particularly due to Apartheid. While one cannot but acknowledge the painful and negative history associated with these socially constructed racial labels, they are still used in modern day South Africa to refer to groups of people (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, et al., 2008). Where this study refers to "Black" or African, "Coloured" or "White", it is with this awareness of the background in mind.

While race is salient in South African society, this study examined difference in more general terms. The CSI module did not aim to focus exclusively on racial difference. Some students used it as an opportunity to engage in discussions about race, while others found it very difficult to enter into discussion about race and avoided it (Leibowitz et al., 2007). The CSI module included any characteristics that can be used to define an identity (Bozalek et al., 2007). Therefore, I decided to follow this approach for this study.

While much literature that refers to "multiculturalism" can be applied to difference in general, the term is often used as a euphemism for "multiracialism". Likewise, white South Africans frequently refer to "culture" as a polite way to denote "race" (McKinney, 2004). While other authors and references in this study might have referred to multiculturalism, this study avoided it as far possible, since it was not always clear what was included and excluded in this term.

The word "diversity" has also acquired a racial undertone, which again limits the scope of issues to skin-colour, ethnicity or socially constructed races, while obscuring other issues. These other issues could include social class, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, as well as discipline and institution, the latter two both receiving additional attention in the CSI module. This list is by no means exhaustive and is merely used to illustrate the possibilities around difference.

The term “difference” was chosen instead of “diversity”, similar to Laubscher and Powell (2003). In the previous paragraph, a few classifiers of identity and thus difference were named. Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, et al. (2008) referred to boundaries of difference when discussing the range of classifiers of difference. While some of these classifiers may be a sensitive topic that can be perceived as walls or fences that have to be scaled, for other people, or for other less sensitive classifiers, this is not the case. Walls are also used to protect and keep others out. Thus, this exclusionary image of boundaries was not useful.

Further, a boundary creates a binary image of one being either on the one or on the other side, with nothing in between (Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990). This binary worldview is hardly accurate. Boundaries might not leave room for the hybrid identities, which Bhabha proposes (Rutherford, 1990) as a solution for the ambivalent nature of identification.

Therefore, this study chose to refer to aspects of difference or dimensions of difference as those classifiers of ways in which people could differ, like gender and race for example, or different identification groups to which people ascribe, for instance “psychologists” or “students from UWC”.

Aspects or dimensions of difference as a phrase is compatible with a hybrid view of identity, or a third space (Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990), which can lie anywhere between the extreme poles or groups of identification. This also complements the intersectionality of identity (Davis, 2008).

1.5 Reflexivity

I was a student of the CSI module in 2008. It was a special learning experience. I have always been passionate about South Africa, with hope for the country's future, but this module showed the optimism in me that things were not as simple as I previously thought. The module compelled introspection and deep reflections on the group processes taking place. The group discussions and interactions brought challenges as well. The internal and group processes, supplemented by the theory, brought personal growth.

Unaware that it was only being presented for a limited period, I was disappointed when I heard that it had ended. I wished more students could experience it, as I was convinced that it would change their way of thinking about South Africa as it had changed mine.

A conversation with another psychology student who completed the module a year before me, made me realise that not all of its students were as positive about the CSI module itself or their experience of it. This student experienced the module negatively, feeling threatened in the group, avoiding judgement and protecting group relations by being dishonest. Further, this student felt that the group work and inter-institutional cooperation in the module caused the student to obtain lower marks for the module, which affected the student's overall year mark adversely.

The student's response surprised me. I felt it was a challenging, but positive experience. Significant and meaningful, the module reminded me of the value of reflection and cooperation between health disciplines to

render holistic services to the different people of South Africa. If I did not have a positive view of the CSI module, I might not have embarked on this study.

Keeping in mind that my opinion of the module was not neutral, this study aimed to present the findings in an unbiased manner. While a completely unbiased account is not possible, it does not prevent researchers from attempting it (Krippendorff, 2004). Throughout the study, I had to distinguish between my opinion and data before me, as well as how my opinion framed the data. This honesty and critical reflexivity is necessary to ensure that the research was essentially reliable and valid (Krippendorff, 2004).

1.6 Overview of the chapters

The next chapter, Chapter 2 explains the theoretical perspective used for this study. Looking at diversity and identity, it adopted a social justice education framework that works toward transformation through reflection combined with action, despite the difficulty of it. This chapter also introduces the methodology used, namely mixed methods.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature about the CSI module and compares it with other similar studies and projects in South Africa and internationally. It shows the gap in current knowledge, which this study aims to fill.

The chapter on the study's methodology, Chapter 4, describes the instrument used and how the data was collected, the demographic information of the population and the sample.

The fifth chapter presents the results from the analysis of the collected data. It includes representations of the quantitative data and themes from participants' qualitative responses to questions about their perception of the CSI module.

In the last chapter, Chapter 6, these results are integrated into relevant knowledge and the implication of findings discussed. Other issues related to the study, such as challenges experienced, are also discussed.

1.7 Summary

This chapter provided the relevant background to the present study. It started with a description of the CSI module, as an interdisciplinary, inter-institutional research and teaching collaboration. It also included details of what the module entailed and what made it unique, as the basis of this study.

The singular nature of the module was also explained as motivation for this study, along with researchers' enquiry as to the long-term effect of the module. Therefore, as stated in section 1.3 above, the aim of the study included determining how students experienced the module, particularly in retrospect, as well as establishing whether their views of the concepts of community and identity, which were central to the module, were changed as a result of the module.

Because the CSI module dealt with identity, which includes dimensions of difference, it is important to clarify what is meant by these concepts for this study, as was done in section 1.4 above. The description “dimensions or aspects of difference” was chosen in favour of boundaries of difference or diversity. “Boundaries of difference” implied a wall or fence that needed to be scaled, while “diversity” was often used as a codeword for racial difference.

For this study, reflexivity was important to avoid opinion clouding subjective judgement. Since I had a positive experience, I have to be mindful of the effect my personal experience could have on the interpretation of the data.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the theoretical premises used in this thesis. It starts with a description of diversity, explaining why diversity can be problematic and the implications that diversity has for the training and practice of health professionals.

This study examines a module that focused on difference and identity from a perspective of social justice education. This framework informed the study, which explores the impact that the CSI module had on students' perception of community, self and identity, as well as their impression of the module as a whole.

2.2 Diversity and difference

While the term “diversity” is commonly used in terms of race, it encompasses much more than just race or ethnicity. It includes difference in terms of race or ethnicity, but also gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, class, age, language or culture (Moradi, 2004; Ocampo et al., 2003; Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). This list is by no means exhaustive as any aspect or distinctive characteristic of a person should denote diversity, for example discipline, institution or motherhood (Moradi, 2004). While diversity is not negative per se, it has been used as criterion to discriminate between and against individuals and groups of people and has acquired a negative connotation (Laubscher & Powell, 2003). Nowadays, diversity has become fused with issues of oppression and privilege (Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007; Quin, 2009; Van Soest & Garcia, 2003).

The oppression and dominance that results from othering in the context of diversity may have negative effects (Freire, 2000), for example causing shame (Zembylas, 2008b). While it can be applied positively to work towards social justice (Zembylas, 2008b), diversity as a term has a negative (racial) connotation, as mentioned above. Therefore, this study rather uses “difference” to denote the ways in which people differ.

Likewise, Laubscher and Powell (2003) chose difference over diversity, acknowledging the “politics of difference”. It questions the distinctions and processes of othering (Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990; Laubscher & Powell, 2003).

Diversity can be problematic when people, as Bigelow (1998) explains, speak of a comfortable, self-righteous discourse of “us” and “them”, which he noted in the United States, but which is present in other countries, including South Africa, too. He refers to a position where people see their own country –or group – as the standard for affluence and justice – or other desirable traits – and other countries as “them”, as poor and helpless, or as having any number of negative characteristics. They perceive the need for liberation and justice to be outside their sphere of power or responsibility. In this way, they try to absolve themselves from

any responsibility towards change (Bigelow, 1998). They tend to be blind to their own oppressive practices and continue indifferently with their conduct.

Therefore, it is important and relevant today to train culturally competent social workers and other health professionals (Quin, 2009; Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). Because of the close relation between oppression and diversity, it is essential that health professionals understand oppression and work to overcome it. As Freire (2000) stated, a society cannot be healthy if there is oppression and domination. Training health professionals should include imparting skills to deal effectively with difference and end oppression. They need to be comfortable with difference and accept that their own view or knowledge is not complete nor the ultimate (Cooner, 2005). However, it takes even more than a set of skills to deal with these issues (Laubscher & Powell, 2003).

Part of understanding difference includes realising that few of the characteristics or aspects of difference are mutually exclusive and thus people differ in many of these aspects. Some of these groupings to which people belong are dominant and acceptable and consequently they celebrate and emphasise them. On the other hand, people would denigrate their membership of other groups that are unfavourable and oppressed (Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). Everyone is dominant in some aspect (Boler, 2005). For example, the black man is oppressed on racial grounds but is dominant in terms of gender. The homosexual white man is oppressed based on his sexual orientation, but he is still dominant with regard to race and gender. This is what the intersectionality (Davis, 2008) of identity explains. This feminist theory primarily addressed how the experiences of women as oppressed gender differ based on their race, but can be applied to aspects of difference as well (Davis, 2008). More dimensions of difference are added to the intersectional identity, to also include sexual orientation, class, disability and religion among others. A person, who is able-bodied, heterosexual or upper class, will have a distinctly different experience from that of a person who is disabled, homosexual or from a lower social class.

2.3 Identity

Because there are so many groups, aspects and characteristics, people's oversimplified self-categorisation can lead to the reinforcement of polar us/them dichotomies (Chryssochoou, 2000). Identity is rather less distinct, with multiple group memberships and identities.

Identity is usually self-determined (Garraat & Piper, 2010) and shaped by self-identifying with certain groups, but not others. Identity is also imposed by others, based on aspects of difference, actions or group membership (Laubscher & Powell, 2003). Because identity can be imposed and not only chosen, it can be problematic if identity is unalterable.

Chryssochoou (2000) suggests that identity rather be seen as a dynamic whole of which the structure and meaning changes as an element of the whole changes. Thus, she continues, as the social context changes, the structure and meaning of identities are flexible and can change as well. This implies that service professionals have to be sensitive and avoid viewing identities as set in stone (Cooner, 2005). Being

masculine today implies something different than it did 10 or 20 years ago, for example. Chryssochoou (2000) further explains that the boundaries and distinctions between groups are dynamic, causing the meanings and structures of the constructed “us” and “them” groups to change as well. The Black Consciousness Movement used the term “Black” collectively, to denote all that were not classified as “White” according to the Apartheid government, and to unite people marginalised on the basis of race. Today, in South Africa, the term “Black” is generally only used for people of African ethnicity and among young adults (Swartz et al., 2009). However, race or ethnicity may only be one aspect of a person's total identity.

Along with the dynamism of identity, it is also not singular. The theory of intersectionality, which originated in feminist theory (Davis, 2008), describes multiple aspects of identity. Crenshaw coined it to distinguish the experience of women of colour from that of other women (Davis, 2008). Davis cites Crenshaw (1989) who argues that race and gender and their interaction have to be taken into account to adequately describe the experiences of Black women. Today, intersectionality describes the interaction of gender, race and the other aspects of difference of an individual, together with social and institutional practices and ideologies. All these factors determine power relations between individuals and groups. This power dynamic between different groups is a focus of intersectionality (Davis, 2008). Different sections of what makes up a person's identity might rank differently in terms of social stature and power.

How individuals view their own identity influences their action. However, structural changes in society lead to changes in the structures and meanings of identities, making it a constantly changing process (Chryssochoou, 2000; Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004; Soudien, 2001). After the changes in identity are absorbed and incorporated, it leads to a readjustment of the existing structures and meanings, which is then incorporated in the self-concept. While these changes are occurring, the individual assesses the process, which also influences the meaning and value the individual ascribes to his/her identity (Chryssochoou, 2000). In this way, a person would decide whether the new changes or identity development is acceptable or not.

These changing structures and how they are incorporated into the self-concept also explains how the oppressed internalise the oppression of the dominant group and the impact it has on the actions – or lack thereof – of the oppressed (Freire, 2000). The value that the dominant structures give a group of people influences how they see themselves. This view of themselves determines how they will react: accepting their fate in docile submission, violently retaliating or working towards liberation for all. Unfortunately, as Glass (2005) states, some labels carry the force of a long and violent history of oppression, which reinforces threat and aggravates previous harm done to identities. In some cases, collective identities are in extreme conflict, as Halabi (2004) describes in Israel, which also complicates individual relationships. This is even more reason why health professionals need to have a clear understanding of the effects of diversity, oppression and identity on individuals, but also on families and groups of people (Cooner, 2005, 2010; Van Soest & Garcia, 2003).

Thus, the differences between individuals and groups of people are used as a basis for power differentials and oppression. These aspects of difference are also what people use to make up their own and others'

identity. This brings about a complexity where people are oppressed based on who they are. The way to repair the situation is to work together to transform society and liberate all. This is achieved by actions based on the principles of social justice.

2.4 Social justice

Furlong and Cartmel (2009) relate social justice to a “principle that every effort should be made to ensure that individuals and groups all enjoy fair access to rewards” (p. 3). It strives for a society that is just, equitable and respectful and free from oppression and dominance. In such a society, equality is not as important as providing equal opportunities of access to an unequal reward structure. Many authors (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009; Greene, 1998; Quin, 2009; Soudien, 2010) agree that it focuses on justice and equality rather than efficiency and efficacy. Their words echo that of Freire (2000), who believes that working toward liberation for all is the most important task. The reason for this is that oppressed and dominant groups are interdependent, caught in an oppressive and destructive dynamic beyond their own choosing (Houston, 2005) and are often unaware of it.

Houston (2005) also agrees with Freire (2000) that the oppressor suffers as much as the oppressed, albeit in different ways. The dominant group suffer because they are alienated from themselves, but also from others. In a dominated society, it is easy to talk of “the other” without really knowing them, talking to them or caring about them (Bigelow, 1998).

Based on the work by Freire (2000), liberation and transformation can only come from a combination of realisation of the oppression, which is achieved through reflection, and action, which is working for a just society in praxis. Practical problems, like issues of power and exclusion, come into play when liberation is put into action, making it essential that diversity, oppression and justice are fully understood (Francis & Hemson, 2007). Social justice has its struggles and while it does not guarantee easy answers (Burbules, 2005) it compels to look for realistic, practical and thorough solutions.

2.4.1 Social justice challenges

Practical social justice is also problematic. Furlong and Cartmel (2009) feel that equal access as a principle of social justice necessitates restrictions on some to provide opportunities to others. While provision of opportunities to the oppressed or less advantaged is widely accepted and endorsed, restriction of the dominant group of the advantaged is understandably hard to swallow (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009).

These socially just equal opportunities are often applied to higher education, which is seen as the way to upward social mobility and a secure future (Bitzer, 2010). However, social justice and equality have different meanings for people from different socio-economic classes. Where working class families may want more opportunities and access, middle class families would want to safeguard their offspring from downward social mobility and the upper classes would want to transfer their privilege to their progenies (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009). They say that this leads to different demands on a so-called socially just education system,

depending on what its envisioned purpose and especially its function is, in the society committed to social justice. This will have a marked influence on society and the future as social justice also promotes wellness (Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007).

Furlong and Cartmel (2009) accuse the British education system of being polarised and contrary to social justice. They argue that it does not promote upward social mobility, especially in admission policies and financial support systems. Furlong and Cartmel found that while there has been greater access to higher education, this access has not been much wider than in the past, with students from lower social classes still experiencing more barriers to higher education than those from the middle and upper classes.

In essence, Furlong and Cartmel (2009) oppose legitimising any differentials between individuals, as this naturally follows from selection on the basis of merit (which is subjective and a result of privilege) or ability (which is randomly distributed).

The incompetent child of the privileged parents should not benefit from his father's status or wealth and the bright child of the underprivileged parents should be aided to gain access. However, the talented child of the privileged parents (who might have inherited talents from the privileged parents) should not be barred access based on the parents' privilege. Determining whether the child is talented or incompetent, is another problem that has been much debated and researched, without arriving at a conclusion (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009). While education cannot be used as a method to protect privileges or socio-economic advantages, it poses a practical problem when there are a limited number of opportunities available and society is committed to promoting justice. In addition, people's conception of social justice differs.

Furlong and Cartmel (2009) argue that (British) universities must advance a social justice agenda to create a society that is truly fair and equal. They say that universities have a duty to design curricula that does more than merely educate students within narrow disciplinary boundaries. Students should be prepared for life beyond university, by the engaging and stimulating of a diverse range of students. Universities should also facilitate cross-class socialisation, instead of reinforcing class-based recruiting (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009). They maintain that social justice includes accessible, quality higher education, irrespective of social or economic circumstances.

A similar debate took place recently, when the University of Cape Town revised its admission policy (Soudien, 2010). In attempt to redress past inequalities and in recognition of disadvantage, 'race' was used as indicator to measure disadvantage, initially. Some quarters voiced the sentiment that it was not an equitable practice and no longer the best indicator of disadvantage, so long after Apartheid has ended. Points that were raised included that a post-Apartheid society needs to progress beyond a racialised approach and that class has become a better determinant of disadvantage.

After much debate, it was decided to retain race as indicator of disadvantage in admission policies (Soudien, 2010). The reasons for this, Soudien (2010) explains, are that the admission policies attempt to redress past injustices as well as recognise and accommodate disadvantage. While the legacy of Apartheid still

influences learner performance, redress is still needed (Soudien, 2010). Low socio-economic status would constitute disadvantage, but to determine this objectively, a special collection of criteria is needed. While such admission policies might be used in future, it is not prudent or practical to assemble some makeshift criteria without proper research (Soudien, 2010).

Bitzer (2010) argues that students from the lower social classes have the smallest representation in universities worldwide, and especially in the most prestigious institutions. He echoes what Furlong and Cartmel (2009) found in Britain, where the competition to gain admission to the elite institutions is very fierce and very few students from lower socio-economic backgrounds apply or gain admission. Bitzer claims that they rather apply to the less prestigious institutions, where the fees are lower and they feel they have a better chance of admission and success, even if the quality is not as high. He warns that diversity should not be mistaken for equity.

When social justice has to be implemented practically, there are various interpretations of what it means and what it requires (Bitzer, 2010), as seen in the problems with admission to institutions of higher education. It is a difficult process especially for the dominant group who feel they have to concede their privileges, but also for the oppressed who have to work towards getting the same rights and privileges as the dominant group. It is a process of unlearning old oppressive practices and socialisations and developing new transformed principles (Francis & Hemson, 2007; Quin, 2009).

The key to adopting the new principles is education. Freire (2000) originally referred to the important role of education in liberation and it has since developed in a specific approach, namely social justice education.

2.5 Social justice education

Social justice education uses the “collective consciousness of the possibility of social transformation” (Quin, 2009, p. 109). It is not just gaining knowledge and learning about the aims or principles of social justice (Quin, 2009), but labours to be liberating, working against oppression by empowering students to promote social justice through their actions. Further, social justice education does not aim to reach a destination but continues to work towards freedom from oppression (Quin, 2009).

Social justice education addresses issues of diversity, oppression and justice, requiring students to understand and engage with these issues critically (Francis & Hemson, 2007; Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007). It also asks of students to reflect critically and scrutinise themselves (Quin, 2009; Zembylas, 2008a). Social justice education is the approach used to promote social justice.

Social justice education aims to educate people, through generating social awareness, into becoming active and participating members of society. In Greene's (1998) opinion this is what Freire (2000) means with “conscientisation”, becoming so aware of injustice that passivity is impossible, so that the ultimate outcome of this process can lead to social change. Houston (2005) recommends that each individual of the dominant group takes responsibility for him or herself to overcome the alienation that has developed between groups.

This responsibility can only flow from awareness. Houston is hopeful that this can free the (former) dominant group to reach a new relationship with the (former) oppressed.

One of the processes used in social justice education is a critical and liberating dialogue (Freire, 2000) between the dominant and oppressed groups, which can disrupt this oppressive dynamic. Others refer to it as democratic dialogue (Boler, 2005; Burbules, 2005).

This dialogue needs to take place in solidarity, with all stakeholders investing in it and dedicated towards reaching the ultimate goal of liberation. Such solidarity can give social justice body (Greene, 1998), where people come together as fellow humans, irrespective of differences.

Health service professionals have a key role in achieving a socially just society, in fostering dialogue and helping with understanding. If health professionals are to be agents of social justice, they need to be properly equipped, through a combination of factual content and meaningful experiences (Freire, 2000). While current society shapes education, education also shapes society (Boler, 2005), specifically in the training of future health professionals. They are the people who have to be agents of liberation in praxis (Freire, 2000).

2.5.1 Democratic dialogue

Democratic dialogue is a key process, but researchers have to be wary of seeking easy, one-dimensional solutions. Even determining who has the right to choose how social justice should be taught is complex (Burbules, 2005). Should it be a government, probably ruled by the dominant group? Should teachers and educators with their best liberating intentions be the ones who choose? Can taxpayers or parents who pay for the education decide what students should learn? Alternatively, should the students choose for themselves? These approaches run the risk of allowing students to remain entrenched in their dominant group ideologies.

Social justice education and democratic dialogue is not easy. There are difficult and complicated issues involved, as shown in the following section. However, the difficulty or complexity of these issues cannot discourage us from building a socially just society. Greene (1998) describes the process of challenging Freire's (2000) internalised oppression as learning to reflect on cultural and social experiences and realising how much of the experiences have been shaped by some kind of oppressor and how much has been freely chosen. This happens in democratic dialogue. Greene also warns that this reflection is neither easy nor safe. It may lead to discomfort or fear and it does not maintain the dominant status quo. Nevertheless, since it is not feasible to sustain democracy without democratic dialogue (Houston, 2005) we still have to attempt it, despite the challenges.

When the dialogue process is examined critically, a number of issues appear (Burbules, 2005). Boler (2005) reminds that not all voices in the dialogue carry equal weight and some may have to be silenced to hear all the voices. Of course, a framework and syllabus for teaching from a social justice perspective needs to be

compiled as well (Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). In addition, there are problems of resistance and feelings of guilt (Houston, 2005) that also hinder the process. Practical implementation of social justice is also difficult.

In order to conduct a meaningful dialogue (Glass, 2005) or give the oppressed a fair opportunity (Boler, 2005), some participants have to be silenced. However, this leads to questions about whether it can be denigrated to a minor cost to silence some students so that others can be heard, as some other educational values might also be compromised (Burbules, 2005). The act of silencing voices may seem simple enough, but on deeper reflection, one realises that is not straightforward.

Dialogue is not “simply” dialogue (Glass, 2005). Democratic dialogue is not always trusted. There are issues like who benefits from it, who controls it, and the skill it requires of the educator to facilitate it effectively (Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). These are just the structural reasons for the distrust of democratic dialogue.

If the dialogue takes place in a spirit of civility that masks difference, the discourse across difference cannot really be facilitated (Mayo, 2005). Mayo argues that it serves the interest of the dominant group, who create the impression of being cultivated and sensitive – and less culpable for dominance. It creates the impression that using the right words challenges and eradicates inequality, but this takes place without altering the practices (Mayo, 2005). The dominant group seeks easy solutions without deep-seated change, such as using politically correct terminology but continuing with oppression. Naturally, superficial change is easier and without any risk of potential emotional harm.

However, if students of social justice education opt for the easy or superficial solutions to the difficulties of democratic dialogue and social justice, they may become caught up in feelings of fear, guilt or shame (Freire, 2000; Houston, 2005; Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007; Zembylas, 2008b).

2.5.2 Fear, shame and guilt

An emotional obstacle to liberation is the fear of freedom (Freire, 2000). This is mostly experienced by the oppressed who have adapted to the structure of domination that has them trapped. Freire (2000) says this fear inhibits them from struggling for liberation, because they do not feel capable of achieving it and do not want to take the required risks to challenge the status quo. Therefore, he suggests that the oppressed and dominant all have obstacles to tackling social justice and liberation together to avoid being overwhelmed. Since the oppressed in one case might also be dominant in another (Boler, 2005; Davis, 2008), it is not as simple as dividing the entire population into these two groups.

A realisation of oppression can bring about shame in the dominant group, for oppressing others, and in the oppressed, for allowing and internalising the oppression (Zembylas, 2008b). The oppression itself can be shameful too. Apart from being discomforting, this shame is usually perceived as negative and destructive – and to be avoided at all cost.

However, Zembylas (2008b) shows how this shame could be used in a positive way. It creates an opportunity for self-reflection and deliberation and can encourage solidarity between the different groups.

Such a reflective process can help the students and educators gain a deepened understanding, if it can transcend the narrow shame-pride dichotomy (Zembylas, 2008b). This understanding diminishes the opposition and can add significantly to the democratic dialogue.

Apart from fear and shame, people may be reluctant to participate in democratic dialogue and to scrutinise themselves to see ways in which they oppress others out of guilt and in protection of their self-worth. Houston (2005) classifies this negative reaction as either public resistance or moral paralysis. She ascribes this to the common “default notion of moral responsibility” (p. 108).

Houston (2005) explains that the moral responsibility is seen as a reflection of a person’s agency and worth. Thus, a person’s sense of worth is judged based on a situation for which they are morally, but maybe not causally, responsible (Houston, 2005). This explains why people resist the feelings of guilt over a social order, in which they have a lack of control, in order to maintain their sense of agency and their self-worth. They resist the process, to avoid or delay becoming paralysed by the guilt and diminished self-worth. The judgements that naturally flow along these lines lead to public resistance or moral paralysis (Houston, 2005).

Houston (2005) solves this dilemma when she proposes using Card’s forward-looking perspective instead of assigning responsibility, blame and guilt. The backward-looking perspective removes individual agency, while the forward-looking perspective asks the individual what he or she can do. It starts with taking responsibility for oneself (Houston, 2005). Of course this acknowledges the present, with what happened in the past, focussing on the internal conflicts as well as obstacles that hinder responsiveness to others (Houston, 2005). It also moves on to the future and its possibilities.

Thus, fear of freedom can be overcome by working towards liberation together. While shame is often viewed as negative, it can be utilised to bring depth to the dialogue between groups (Zembylas, 2008b). Awareness of oppression can also instil feelings of guilt and diminished self-worth. With the realisation that moral responsibility does not equal self-worth, such feelings of guilt can inspire acts of liberation (Houston, 2005). However, this may sound simpler than it is in praxis.

People need moral and political clarity about the aims and methods used so that the broader struggle for justice and democracy can be served without moral or political inconsistency (Glass, 2005). However, no one is above reprimand and Glass (2005) continues that striving for moral purity, free of racism, sexism and so forth, is hoping for the wrong thing. It is not possible. It is a process, not a destination (Quin, 2009). Glass rather suggests being committed and hoping to become more effective in the struggle for social justice and democracy. This struggle is messy: it leaves no one innocent and all, ultimately, have dirty hands (Glass, 2005) and therefore each person has to take responsibility for themselves (Houston, 2005). Glass’s suggested solution is that life ideally be viewed as continually negotiated compromises, shaping citizens that are actively involved in the negotiations. “There is no finish to such work, the struggle for a just democracy is a way of life” (Glass, 2005, p. 25).

2.5.3 *The way of life*

The problems and challenges associated with social justice cannot discourage society, and especially the oppressed, from labouring towards liberation and democracy (Freire, 2000). Houston (2005) quotes Bai when she states that “the power of democracy lies in the wisdom that emerges from putting our minds and hearts together” (p.106). Disagreement in thought can be expected, but it is important to have spaces to engage about these conflicts without systematically dominating the oppressed (Houston, 2005). She does not shy away. She still supports attempting democratic dialogue, despite the challenges and obstacles in the dialogue, advocating unity as the key trait.

Glass (2005) also acknowledges that this dialogue is not easy and should not be viewed too simplistically. There are many dualities and challenges to be considered. Educators who teach the principles of social justice and whose students are engaged in the issues need to be mindful of their students’ needs. These challenging lessons can cause distress, resentment and despair (Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). It is useful too, if they keep it in mind that their students might be reacting with resistance or paralysis (Houston 2005), shame (Zembylas, 2008b) or fear (Freire, 2000). Social justice aims to heal, remedy and repair (Greene, 1998) but also hopes to instil agency in the oppressed but not at the cost of others. This makes it essential that social justice education is undertaken in the proper manner.

The mindset is crucial. As Garrison (2005) explains, “approaching the ‘other’ as if a dialogue can occur enhances the possibility it will” (p.96). Houston (2005) describes this attitude as goodwill. The participants need to approach dialogue from a positive state of mind.

For Freire (2000), this kind of education requires the combination of action and reflection. There is want for critical questions and active learning (Greene, 1998). People need to reflect to become conscious of the oppressive status quo. However, if this awareness does not translate into praxis, the reflection has no value. Likewise, if there are practical changes in people’s actions, but the people are still oppressed in their minds, they are not truly liberated and there is no social justice either.

The other requirement is cognisance of the fact that every individual is also part of groups; all parties have to acknowledge each person as a unique individual and a member of groups (Houston, 2005). This individuality and collectivity of identity need to be considered. It is also important to keep in mind that the dominant group will prefer to be seen as individuals, while the subordinate group would prefer to see them as members of the dominant group but do not have the power to invoke this (Houston, 2005). This potential source of tension deserves attention. It is also important to keep in mind that it is possible and imperative to maintain respect, even for the so-called opponents of liberation, in the struggle (Glass, 2005). Hopefully this respect can win them over.

Changed relationships are possible, although it is complicated. Freire (2000) refers to a struggle towards liberation. Boler (2005), Burbules (2005) and Glass (2005) describe the democratic dialogue as difficult and add that hands get dirty, even with the best intentions. However, with the collective obligation to build a

socially just society (Glass, 2005) that is free from all forms of oppression and dominance, how can people not adopt this way of life?

2.6 Conclusion

Respect for “the plural compelling conceptions of the good that can shape democracy” and recognition of “the malleability and contradictions of identity” are essential to radically transform and liberate unjust societies (Glass, 2005, p. 27). Without respect for diversity and an understanding of identity, social justice cannot function.

This chapter explains how common diversity is as well as some of the effects that diversity has on people. Diversity may lead to dominance, oppression and discrimination and it is essential that health professionals learn how to deal with diversity successfully.

Because difference has an impact on identity, this chapter also describes how identity develops. Identity also consists of many different parts. In the dynamic society, an inflexible identity can be detrimental, as identity is also subject to the shifting outside influences. These outside influences can also be oppressive, which can have a negative impact.

To address this oppression, Freire (2000) proposes social justice. The latter is built on principles of equality and strives towards liberation of the oppressed and the oppressors. The process that promotes social justice and cultivates it in society is social justice education. One of the instruments of social justice education, used to work towards liberation and transformation of society, is democratic dialogue.

This kind of dialogue, like social justice and liberation alike, are not simple processes; they all have some elements of struggle. Some of the practical challenges associated with it are problems of access and equality, especially in institutes of higher education, in South Africa as well as other countries around the world. It is also complicated deciding who should be the main decision makers. Furthermore, educators encounter public resistance and moral paralysis, caused by feelings of guilt. Health professionals working from a social justice perspective encounter unwillingness as well as indolence. Fear and shame can also influence people negatively, if not managed and applied constructively. Still, the process is not simple.

These problems can be remedied by acknowledging that liberation is a struggle. Health professionals and educators should take notice of participants’ emotional needs (Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). It is also a collective process and everyone has to be involved. The process should also combine reflection and action. Furthermore, a mindset of looking forward is much more helpful than looking back.

As Glass (2005) puts it, “[d]irty hands come with conscientious citizenship” (p.27). As people’s awareness grows, it is important to remember that all have dirty hands. This causes people to be less blaming and judgemental, because a fellow accomplice has no court in which to judge. Judging is not helpful in the struggle towards liberation, but awareness is essential.

As the CSI module was based on the principles of social justice education, this study uses the same perspective. It hopes to uncover the complete picture of students' impressions of the CSI module and determine whether it was successful in changing their perceptions.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The CSI module taught students from a perspective of social justice. It focused on identity, self and community; and therefore, diversity or difference came to the fore.

In the interaction between the students, consisting of diverse group members, participants were confronted with their own identities as well as difference. The collaboration and contact with the others drew attention to some differences between students' backgrounds, languages and races, but also different disciplines.

This chapter compares some courses and their accompanying evaluations that have some similarities with the CSI module or this current study. These studies can be divided into two groups, of which the one is studies that explore aspects of difference that are related to characteristics or a person's personal identity. The other group of studies explore the collaboration between different disciplines, roles or professions, which represent participants' professional identity.

Since it appears as if race or ethnicity is often the focus of studies in difference or diversity, this chapter includes some studies on multiculturalism as difference. It also compares other courses that focus on other differences, like culture or gender.

The other focus of studies conducted across dimensions of difference is that of discipline or profession. While interprofessional education still constitutes only a small part of the education of health professionals, there has recently been an increase in the number of interprofessional education opportunities, in various guises, that has emerged as a part of the training of health professionals.

Few of the studies discussed here were conducted from a social justice education perspective. The two studies that are mentioned here, that used a social justice education perspective, were courses offered as enrichment to full-time teachers. The one was offered in South Africa and the other in Cyprus.

This chapter concludes with some of the outstanding features of the CSI module, where identity, community and difference intersected. The module confronted students with their personal identity and professional identity in a community context.

3.2 The need for dealing effectively with difference

It appears as if dealing effectively with difference is getting increasing attention from researchers and educators; whether it is multicultural competence (Liu, Sheu, & Williams, 2004) or not discriminating against people based on their sexual orientation (Mayo, 2005). This also suits a social justice education paradigm.

The appeal from the South African Government's Department of Education requiring institutions of higher education to transform in order to reflect the changes that are taking place in society as well as to address the nation's needs (Department of Education, 1997) also makes sense from this perspective. Programmes are required to meet the needs of social development (Council on Higher Education [CHE], 2002). From a social justice perspective, the tolerance of difference in general, as well as the ability to deal with diversity and change, is of cardinal importance (Swartz et al., 2009). This approach is especially relevant in the education and training of health service professionals, as they are the people in direct contact with the community, addressing their needs.

Despite the emphasis on the need for the student population in higher education to reflect the South African demographic profile, in general, as well as at each South African university (Department of Education, 1997), this profile, which implies racial diversity, is not reflected in reality. Even when student populations are multiracial, studies examining white students in South Africa found that they have very little interaction with students of other races (McKinney, 2004, 2007). It was also found that South African students of all races struggled and even avoided engaging deeply in discussions on their differences (Leibowitz et al., 2007). Thus, group interactions across boundaries of race or culture are not the norm, making it important to equip students to work across them to promote social justice.

3.3 Equipping students to deal effectively across multiple levels of difference

The practical aspects of this preparation of students to work across racial or cultural difference are not that simple. It implies some measure of multicultural skill or competence that needs to be imparted. Liu et al. (2004) found that as doctoral students perceived themselves as increasingly multi-culturally competent, their anxiety about conducting multicultural research increased. Increased perceived multicultural competence also correlated positively with the number of multicultural courses they had attended. Thus, as their perceived competence increased, their anxiety also increased. A reason they suggested is that these students were more aware of complex cultural aspects involved in multicultural research. However, the number of courses attended also increased students' confidence in their own ability to conduct multicultural research. As they learnt about multiculturalism topics, they became more familiar and comfortable with them. However, they were also more aware of pitfalls in multicultural research, which still led to increased confidence and anxiety.

Lui et al. (2004) found that an environment that is perceived as supportive is also conducive to fostering students' self-efficacy in multicultural research. A climate that is supportive is also necessary to foster the

confidence of students working in multicultural environments (Clarke, Miers, Pollard, & Thomas, 2007; Tomlinson-Clarke, 2000; Van Soest & Garcia, 2003).

The importance of a supportive environment has important implications for modules, courses and workshops that focus on multicultural skills. By providing workshops with a multicultural element, students (of psychology, social work and occupational therapy or any other human service profession) can gain more confidence in their ability to work successfully and do research on issues related to multiculturalism. It may not decrease their anxiety, because they know that there is a lot to consider, but it would give them some self-assurance in their ability to deal effectively with multiculturalism (Liu et al., 2004). Thus, multiculturalism can seem like a boundary, but does not need to be an insurmountable obstacle.

3.4 Other aspects of difference

However, multiculturalism is only one aspect of diversity that South African health service providers need to deal with. Difference is a much broader construct. Many studies focus on multiculturalism as if it is (the only form of) difference. Moradi (2004) assumes various diversities exist and quotes the review by Ocampo et al. (2003) that states that a broad range of diversities (or differences for the sake of this study) needed to be attended to. Multiculturalism, referring to various cultures or racial groups, is only an aspect of difference, albeit the most conspicuous and challenging.

Hall (1991), quoted by Dudgeon and Fielder (2006), suggests that cultural identity could be perceived as a shared history that a group of people have in common and which is ultimately a re-telling of the past, instead of a definite reality. It also recognises the similarities as well as critical points of difference and acknowledges internal group diversity. Cultural identity is more than just “being,” but is also “becoming”. This echoes Bhabha, in an interview with Rutherford (1990), who describes identification as a process of othering. Sonn and Green (2006) mention a frustration with the static understanding of culture and intercultural relationships that form the basis of models and theories used to teach cultural competence. Binarism (Bhabha, quoted by Rutherford, 1990) does not reflect the real world accurately. Bhabha campaigns for hybrid view of identity that puts together different meanings and is not recognisable as any of its constituting parts. This creates the “third space,” enabling other positions (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006) in identifications. It seems that there is a move away from rigid, set definitions of diversity to an incorporation of more fluid definitions.

Bhabha (Rutherford, 1990) described people as always drawing on multiple forms of identification. He says they are waiting to be created and constructed. Such a flexible and fluid view of identity, and thus difference too, is more accepting, as a person is not only one thing, all their life, but growing and evolving.

There is also a shift to being multicultural, meaning transformative, rather than merely being (racially) diverse, where the numbers and percentages are of exclusive importance (Higbee, Siaka & Bruch, 2007; Liu et al., 2004). Where diversity simply counts members of each category, transformative multiculturalism

accepts and cherishes each individual. Moradi (2004) uses an expanded and inclusive view of difference that includes age, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, but also motherhood, for example.

3.5 Studies about personal aspects of difference

All around the world, studies have been done that focus on teaching and equipping students to work and interact across racial and other dimensions of difference. While every setting in every country is unique, it is worthwhile to look at what others have done for information and comparison.

In Israel, the boundaries and tension between the Jewish and Arab Israeli's are severe and the resulting conflict is very real and violent. There are many organisations that provide encounter work between the two groups, attempting to bridge the divide (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004). Hansen (2006) did an ethnographic study of encounter workshops for high school students from the two groups at one such an institution. For two to four days, the students typically participated in sharing activities and games that focused on culture and identity, peace and conflict. The workshop experience was described as an opportunity to go beyond their identities and histories as members of each respective group. Hansen observes that it was a learning experience for the students, although they were not yet conscious or reflective about the experience and what impact it had on them while they were at the workshop (Hansen, 2006).

Halabi and Sonnenschein (2004) describe the workshops at their institution as a confronting and sometimes unpleasant experience for participants. They go out from the assumption that the type of learning that they want to promote can only come from personal experience, understood and grounded in a theoretical framework (Nadler, 2004). Therefore, they use an intergroup approach in order to help participants develop greater awareness of their own identities as well as the realities of the conflict and their position in it (Halabi, 2004). While students are treated as equals at the course, that is not the case outside the confines of the School for Peace (Suleiman, 2004), for example.

Because of the institutionalised discrimination and tension between the groups, encounters that occurred as individuals separate from their group identity were not that successful (Nadler, 2004), as students are amiable, but their attitudes and actions towards people of other groups do not change. Students are confronted with reality and themselves (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004). The aim is for students to explore and evolve their identities through interaction (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004) to develop mature identities and consciousness of the situation.

Similarly, Sonn, Garvey, Bishop and Smith (2000) describe a space, which facilitated dialogue. The development of a unit for indigenous and cross-cultural psychology at an Australian university evolved from a need to understand and incorporate indigenous psychology. They experienced a lack of existing modules on which to base their own curricula. There was a specific need amongst people who had high levels of personal interaction in a professional capacity, to be better prepared to work with "indigenous" people (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006). The core objectives of the unit included understanding different people's

background, the interplay of various factors and developing sensitivity to others' values as well as increased awareness of own values (Sonn et al., 2000).

In Britain, there is a masters program in social work (Cooner, 2005) that shares many commonalities with the CSI module. The students are also allocated to groups that are organised to have a specific diverse profile. Consciousness of students' own identity is also the starting point for further discovery and engagement with diversity. Like the CSI course, the British module is also web mediated but British students seem to have easier access to the internet than some CSI students. A general problem with web assisted modules is the assumption of equal and easy access (Rohleder, Bozalek, et al., 2008). Another difference between the two courses is that the British communities described in the study are much more distinct, separate communities, often distinguishable by language, ethnicity and country of origin. In South Africa, those discrete categories have faded to such an extent that it becomes difficult to define all the different communities. The CSI course also did not explicitly focus on racial or ethnic differences. These differences were raised by students, however.

Moradi (2004) from the University of Florida also suggests ways in which to engage students on diversity. She argues that psychology instructors could use role-play as a teaching exercise to teach students about diversity (Moradi, 2004). As part of a psychology module related to diversity and stereotyping, this exercise would entail students spending a day with someone that differs from them in some chosen aspect and write a reflective paper afterwards. In the article, it was used specifically in a psychology of women module, although the author feels that it can be elaborated and adapted to suit any module related to issues of diversity and stereotyping, if well prepared and accompanied by relevant literature.

Although such an experience can be valuable and enriching, spending a day modelling or shadowing someone who differs from yourself would not necessarily give an account of a person's life experience. It is not always practical, for example, to find a model or to model someone of a different race. This teaching exercise seems time-consuming and by limiting the experience to one other person's reality, might restrain the appreciation for other kinds of diversity. A once-off experience also has the potential to reinforce negative stereotypes, which may not be helpful. Isolated experiences may not always provide students with a variety of experiences in order to mediate negative stereotypes.

Case (2007) evaluated a psychology course on diversity at a university in Kentucky. She found that a series of lectures and group discussions on racial and gender identity and related topics increased awareness of racism and white privilege as well as white guilt and support for affirmative action. It did not decrease prejudice against people of other races. However, this course focussed primarily on white people's attitudes and limited difference to being mainly racial difference. The CSI course did not focus on race explicitly. The module was constituted, in part due to the universities that participated, to include multiple differences, and one of them was about historical divisions along racial fault lines.

In most studies, including a study by Kernahan and Davis (2007), a post-test took place at the end of their module. Kernahan and Davis (2007) found that students taking a course in the psychology of prejudice and

racism at an American university in Wisconsin became more aware of racism and white privilege and reported higher levels of white guilt than their counterparts in the control group. Since the course was named “psychology of prejudice and racism”, it was anticipated that students who took the course would be more apt to notice and identify racism. The course did have the predicted effect. However, their sample was rather small and homogenous and their focus was mainly on white racism, privilege and guilt, attending to neither general multiculturalism nor general diversity (or difference).

It seems as if modules that look at difference in terms of race, gender or other determinants of identity, often start with participants examining and evaluating their own identity and work through dialogue and interaction across the difference. The CSI module also has this in common with other similar models.

3.6 Studies about professional difference

Apart from personal characteristics of identity, there is also a professional aspect of identity. The different professions often have their own hierarchy, where some view their discipline as better than or more important than others (Carpenter, Erickson, Purves, & Hill, 2004; Cooke, Chew-Graham, Boggis, & Wakefield, 2003). This hierarchy and distance between the different professions are not advancing the principles of social justice.

If there can be better cooperation between the health services, it can also lead to better service provision (Zwarenstein, Bryant, & Reeves, 2003). In addition, there are numerous calls from organisations, like the World Health Organisation and other health stakeholders, to improve the cooperation between different health professions (Lidskog, Löfmark, & Ahlström, 2008; Payler, Meyer, & Humphris, 2008; Salvatori, Berry, & Eva, 2007). They hope to achieve more effective healthcare service delivery by fostering interprofessional and interagency cooperation.

Interprofessional cooperation is most often applied to physicians and nurses, who work together in hospitals and other clinical settings but act out a distinct difference in rank. In many studies, other auxiliary health professionals are included, including occupational therapists, social workers, dieticians, physiotherapists and pharmacists among others (Lidskog et al., 2008; Payler et al., 2008; Salvatori et al., 2007). Psychology students were rarely part of the interdisciplinary modules. In their literature review, Payler et al. (2008) do not describe or refer to any interprofessional modules that includes psychology students or professionals from that discipline. The other disciplines of the CSI module, occupational therapy and social work, are mentioned in many studies (Clarke et al., 2007; Payler et al., 2008).

There are some obstacles to this kind of interprofessional cooperation. This includes a reluctance to show shortcomings to others and a desire to maintain a professional distance and to appear competent and able to carry out all procedures (Cooke et al., 2003). Often, there is a certain culture embedded within each profession that determines how they view other professions and how the people from the different professions interact. This culture, along with its prevalent values and attitudes, hinders teamwork and results

in fragmented and sometimes ineffective care (Curran, Sharpe, Forristall, & Flynn, 2008; Zwarenstein et al., 2003).

It is not clear when this culture starts to permeate the students and likewise, researchers differ on the best time to implement the course. The attitudes might be embedded before the students start studying, as part of their socialisation (Curran et al., 2008), or during the course of their studies, when they develop their professional identity (Cooke et al., 2003), or when they work in practical settings like training wards (Lidskog et al., 2008).

There are a range of theories on the optimal time to implement interprofessional education (Payler et al., 2008). The more mature students made a positive difference in the course that Clarke et al. (2007) taught, as their maturity increased the chance that they would have previous experience of interprofessional cooperation and have a better appreciation of the collaboration's value.

Lidskog et al. (2008) found that the training ward and responsibilities have to resemble the real clinical setting for an interprofessional course to be of the most value to students. They suggest that this would have the greatest impact on students' practice, once they have qualified. This would imply that students have to reach a certain level of training before being introduced to the interprofessional setting, so that they have some skills to apply.

Others feel that students should be taught to collaborate early on in their education, to foster good teamwork (Payler et al., 2008) and to prevent them from being indoctrinated by their profession's prejudices (Curran et al., 2008). Others feel that it does not matter at what stage of their education students are exposed to interprofessional collaboration (Salvatori et al., 2007).

Most of the interprofessional education opportunities include work in small groups and require reflection of the students (Payler et al., 2008). Much of the learning takes place in these small groups, through interaction with students from the different disciplines.

Carpenter et al. (2004) did a study that had some similarities to the current study. It was also an evaluation of a past module, an interdisciplinary module. The elective module was about ethics, from the interprofessional perspective, looking at different professions' contribution, and was offered at a university in British Columbia. Ten years after the outset of the course, all the students who had completed the course were mailed the questionnaire. The researchers got the postal addresses from the university's alumni association. They reported a 25% response rate, after subtracting the envelopes that were returned unopened. The findings of Carpenter et al.'s (2004) study included a positive relationship between students who had completed this interdisciplinary module and their ability to work in a diverse team.

Another study, by Clarke et al. (2007), looked at factors that affected group interaction in the small groups of an interdisciplinary module. They took note of participants' demographic information, including age, experience, gender and race. While Clarke et al. reported that factors like participation, group cohesion and a tendency to avoid conflict influenced the group interactions; they also found that the demographic factors

influenced students' experience of the module. For example, the more mature students would fill a more leading role in the group discussions, or students whose first language was not English experienced difficulty following all the group discussions. Naturally, the composition of this group was quite different from that of the CSI module. Only 13 of the 192 students were "black and ethnic minority" students. It was also these students who experienced difficulty with the language. As Clarke et al. concedes, the composition of the group surely influences the students' experience of the interprofessional module and thus, because of the different composition of the groups in the CSI module, this might have a different effect on the participants' experience.

Very few interprofessional South African studies have been published. Most published studies have been conducted in Northern America and the United Kingdom (Payler et al., 2008). One of the South African studies that could be located was done in a ward of a teaching hospital. It was conducted over a period of four weeks, focusing on the relationships between doctors and nurses (Zwarenstein et al., 2003). Elements of the intervention included team building activities, reorganising the staff groups and focussing on patient care and planning as a team. In comparison with the control ward, there was better communication between doctors and nurses, patients stayed shorter and reported greater satisfaction in the ward where the intervention took place (Zwarenstein et al., 2003). While this study did not use a social justice perspective and not all the participants were students, it showed that interprofessional collaboration is advantageous for the professionals and the clients.

While the studies described here brought together students from different disciplines, it did not have the community and identity focus that the CSI module had. It was also done using different pedagogies (Payler et al., 2008), but none was offered from a perspective of social justice education.

3.7 Dealing with difference from a social justice education perspective

Two studies that were conducted from a perspective of social justice education were a South African course (Francis & Hemson, 2007) and a Cypriot course (Zembylas, 2008a). Both courses were offered to in-service teachers and not health professionals, but examined identity and its role in social justice.

Zembylas's (2008a) had another similarity with the CSI module, namely that a large component of the module was taught and presented online, using a web platform to post material and conduct conversations. He taught the course over the course of 30 weeks, with four face-to-face sessions and the internet based communication in-between (Zembylas, 2008a) and found it to be a useful platform to share difficult and sensitive emotions, related to race and oppression for example.

Teaching a course about cultural diversity and oppression elicited some intense emotions (Francis & Hemson, 2007; Zembylas, 2008a), and in his evaluative study, Zembylas (2008a) focuses on the impact and use of these emotions, in a course that uses critical emotional reflexivity. He also suggests using shame in a constructive way when dealing with issues of difference and oppression (Zembylas, 2008b). He does not see emotion as an effect of the process, rather than an important part of fully understanding the process of

engaging with issues of oppression and diversity, that can also be used to analyse one's reactions and intentions (Zembylas, 2008a).

Students were expected to explore their own thoughts and emotions about social categories and the way they view of others, while the course material covers theories and studies related to culture, identity, conflict and community. They had to keep emotion journals of these thoughts and experiences (Zembylas, 2008a).

The course was based on principles such as that being a member of a marginalised group creates a better understanding and fosters important empathy (Zembylas, 2008a). Looking at class discrimination, instead of race, he made his students aware of other forms of prejudice and discrimination.

With this study, Zembylas (2008a) confirmed that students' critical emotional reflexivity was shaped by their previous experiences of diversity and discrimination. These experiences also influenced how students engaged with issues in this reflexivity (Zembylas, 2008a). Often students experience some emotion of discomfort, as part of a "pedagogy of discomfort" (Boler, 2005). This pedagogy, that recognises the discomfort, can offer an examination of students' emotional attachment to certain ideas and ideologies (Zembylas, 2008a). It asks of students to leave their comfort zones and realise what and how they have been trained to see.

For Zembylas (2008a), it is essential that "educators who are interested in teaching about multiculturalism and social justice must recognize in what ways learners' emotions define how and what one chooses to see, and conversely, not to see." (p. 78)

This critical reflexivity fosters an awareness of a person's own prejudices and discriminations. It is essential that social justice educators master this skill. Health professionals can also benefit from developing such an emotional awareness. Reflexivity was an important part of the CSI module (Rohleder, Swartz, Bozalek, et al., 2008), but it did not focus as intently on emotions as the module of Zembylas (2008a).

The aims of the South African programme were to develop participants' understanding of diversity, oppression, justice and other related issues, as well as their ability to teach about these issues (Francis & Hemson, 2007). It was characterised by the active participation and reflection of the participants. It required skills like empathetic listening and questions probing for experience (Francis & Hemson, 2007), which are both also very important to health professionals.

During the course of the programme, the students planned and gave presentations to their fellow students and lecturers, working in small groups. The course also had a strong reflective element, as students had to keep a journal of the process, for example (Francis & Hemson, 2007).

Francis and Hemson (2007) hoped to instil an informed consciousness in their students, where the teachers examine systems and practices critically for forms of oppression still present. The process cannot work towards the goal of achieving non-racism or non-sexism. It is not possible. Francis and Hemson rather suggest a keen awareness of the ways in which each one still conspires with oppression and the ways

oppression is challenged and resisted. The process is difficult and met with resistance (Zembylas, 2008a), like any social justice endeavour. In their programme, Francis and Hemson attempted to create a safe space within their groups, supporting students through the course of it. They found it became difficult to make the transition from only learning the social justice education principles to integrating them, as oppressive practices tend to resurface (Francis & Hemson, 2007). The process needs to take place systematically, paying attention to the ever-present issues of power and oppression.

These two studies taught social justice education by confronting students with often uncomfortable realisations. It required of students to reflect on themselves, their views and actions quite critically. It also included interactions in small groups, which led to difficult situations and confrontations. Although the process is difficult and discomforting, it is an essential part of social justice education.

3.8 Comparing the CSI module to other studies

There are other programmes that share some features with the CSI module. This includes the module's focus on difference in terms of identity, the use of the online web platform, the focus on interprofessional collaboration or the social justice approach. However, the other studies had only one or two of these common features. In addition, very few of the courses were presented in South Africa.

The CSI module is uniquely embedded in a divided and unjust past (Swartz et al., 2009). In Israel there is also a violent and divided past that influences current relations between groups (Halabi, 2004; Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004; Hansen, 2006; Nadler, 2004), but their continuing situation today is very different from that of South Africa. While the CSI students did not agree on the relevance the past has or influence it should have (Swartz et al., 2009), this past cannot be negated.

The work of Sonn et al., (2000) also looks at working with people across dimensions of (ethnic) difference, but they focus more on theories of indigenous psychology, than individual identity.

The course of Cooner (2005) had British social work students examine their own identity, to understand the different communities where they did their practical training and will work in when they are qualified. Their module was also web mediated, like the CSI module.

Zembylas (2008a) and Clarke et al. (2007) also used web-assisted technology to teach their courses. The value of online learning has been recognised in higher education (Rohleder, Bozalek, et al., 2008), offering students easy access to material and communication with educators. Online communication can also be a useful tool to facilitate difficult conversations about sensitive topics (Zembylas, 2008a). Rohleder, Bozalek, et al.'s (2008) findings confirm this, when they discuss students' experience of the online interactions during the CSI Module. Of course, internet access in South Africa is not as widespread or accessible as in more developed countries (Rohleder, Bozalek, et al., 2008).

There are many other ways employed to teach students about difference and diversity related issues. The courses that Moradi (2004), Case (2007) and Kernahan and Davis (2007) evaluated are examples of these,

each with a slightly different focus, like white privilege and stereotyping. However, it does not seem as if these more conventional teaching methods were that effective in changing students' prejudice (Case, 2007).

With the interprofessional courses, it was important to ensure the course content was relevant to the involved disciplines and to make sure it fit into all the involved disciplines' timetables (Davys & Beddoe, 2009; Payler et al., 2008). Some of the studies focussed on communication skills, specifically sharing bad news (Cooke et al., 2003), ethics (Carpenter et al., 2004) and care in rural areas (Salvatori et al., 2007). The combination of disciplines participating in the courses depended on the course content. However, it is strange that the courses included no psychology students at all. The reason for this is unclear.

The main difference between the two programmes that addressed social justice education and the other programmes was that their students were working teachers, and not aspiring health professionals. Students also engaged with difference and each other and the process was emotionally difficult (Francis & Hemson, 2007; Swartz et al., 2009; Zembylas, 2008a).

Regarding the current study, many of the evaluations used a combination of quantitative and qualitative sources, including surveys, journals and observations (Lidskog et al., 2008; Payler et al., 2008). All of the evaluations were conducted directly at the end of the course, with the exception of the study by Carpenter et al. (2004).

3.9 The value of the CSI module

The CSI module attempted to train "reflexive and socially responsive professionals" (Rohleder, Swartz, Bozalek, et al., 2008, p. 131). It needs to be examined whether the project was effective in this regard, making a meaningful difference in students' perceptions of the other groups, as well as their perception of collaboration across difference in general. Although the project made a difference in how students viewed their fellow students in the seven weeks of the project (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, et al., 2008), some feel the course's duration was too short to make a lasting impression.

It would be valuable to find out if something similar to what Hansen (2006) experienced – students learning while still unaware of it – happened with the CSI module and if it made a difference in their views over a longer period of time. Most of the students who did the course in its first or second year would be working by now, mostly employed in the health and welfare systems and other diverse working environments. It is hypothesised that students may value what they experienced in the CSI module more after they started working. While at university, the exposure to the other disciplines and institutions were limited, but the module may have been sufficient to teach students some skills in dealing effectively with not only racial diversity, but difference overall.

This study is valuable to ascertain if diversity courses in higher education in general and this one in particular have a chance of seemingly improving attitudes and practices towards difference as determined some time after the end of the course.

In the CSI module, there was also a focus on participants' own identities to appreciate the diversity of others, where students had to draw and share their perceptions of their own communities as well as their past life experience. All students' identities and experiences were acknowledged and validated in an environment of mutual trust and respect. This is similar to many of the other programs (Cooner, 2005; Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004; Hansen, 2006) where participants examine their own identity in order to appreciate difference in others as well.

One of the strengths of the CSI course was that it included a very wide variety of dimensions of difference, including profession and institution. Students were not specifically asked to engage on racial issues or racial differences (Swartz et al., 2009), but students were also reluctant to do so, preferring "safer" and less emotional aspects of difference (Rohleder et al., 2007), like socio-economic class and religion.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the CSI module and this study. The module, presented from a social justice education perspective, dealt with community and identity and issues of difference.

In their small workgroups, students were confronted with various kinds of difference, similar to what they will have to deal with in practice. With this exposure, the educators hoped to help students prepare for this reality. The social justice education perspective also compels the educators to equip students to be agents for equality amidst the difference.

As racial difference is very salient in South Africa and a sensitive topic in many countries, it can cause anxiety in professionals that have to work with it. This can occur even if they had courses about multiculturalism that increased their confidence to deal with it. A supportive environment can help ease this anxiety.

The CSI module did not only address racial difference, but also looked at other aspects of identity and difference. While many courses focus more on race, others include other characteristics of identity. As the module dealt with difference, it also addressed identity. This is based on the premise that people who are comfortable with and aware of their own identity can respect the differing, and sometimes opposite, identities of others as well (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004). They also need to be adept at handling the fluctuations in identity.

For this chapter, difference was divided into the aspect of personal identity and professional identity, as most of the courses deal with either the one or the other. Studies in Israel, Britain, Australia and the United States that address some kinds of difference in personal identity are described in more detail.

While some of these courses are run under difficult circumstances, students also experience it as troubling and challenging. The process is not easy. Some other courses that follow a more conventional approach are less successful in changing attitudes.

There is an entire separate body of literature dealing with interprofessional education. While there are many such courses studies in the northern hemisphere, very few South African interprofessional studies have been published. The interprofessional education aims to foster improved cooperation and result in better service provision.

While many health related disciplines, including social work and occupational therapy, participate in these courses, very few include psychology students. There are also many other issues regarding interprofessional education. This includes negative attitudes and prejudice towards other disciplines and an uncertainty as to the best time to implement interprofessional programmes.

The chapter also describes two social justice education programmes that were presented to working teachers. These programmes, the one South African and the other hosted in Cyprus, dealt with emotions and sensitive issues, requiring students to reflect and hoping to foster a critical awareness of oppression in students.

All the studies are summarised and compared to the CSI module, shortly referring to where each study was conducted and what its focus was. It is highlighted which part of each study is relevant to the CSI module and this study, for example studies that had a web based component or focussed on personal identity.

Furthermore, this chapter describes what aspects of the CSI module made it unique. It elaborates on its contributions, aims and strengths. The fact that the module looked at many aspects of difference and not only race as well as combining personal and professional identity stood out. The value of this particular study, as a part of the larger CSI project, is also proposed.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research questions, the methodology and study design chosen to answer these questions as well as the population used in the study. The instrument and data analysis are also explained. The chapter concludes with some important considerations, including the study's validity, ethics and significance. Methodology is applied throughout this chapter as a tool used to describe the research process and not the subject matter (Krippendorff, 2004).

4.2 Aim

This study's purpose is to evaluate the impact that the CSI module had on human service professions students who completed the module in 2006, 2007 and 2008, from their perspective. The module required students to share their own and engage with each other's experiences of and theoretical perspectives on "community", "self" and "identity" in small groups that consisted of students from the different disciplines of social work, psychology and occupational therapy.

4.3 Research questions

The main research question in this study is whether students felt that the module, taken a few years ago, helped to prepare them to work across dimensions of difference such as professions, universities, race and language. The second research question seeks to establish whether the module influenced student views of core concepts (community and identity).

4.4 Research design

This study is approached from a theoretical framework of social justice. Chapter 2 emphasises the importance of social justice values such as equality and liberation, challenges facing social justice education and suggestions for dealing with them. To examine the effects of the past CSI module from a social justice perspective, a mixed methodology was chosen.

Creswell & Tashakkori (2007) classify researchers' choice for a mixed methodology into four categories, according to the different perspectives that the researchers take on mixed methodology. This includes firstly seeing it as a distinct research methodology in its own right or secondly only as a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and data types (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007). The third reason for choosing mixed methodology is for paradigmatic reasons, based on the researchers' philosophical views, or finally, for

practical reasons, where researchers use mixed methodology as a set of procedures. Creswell and Tashakkori also acknowledge that these perspectives are not mutually exclusive.

For this study, a mixed methodology was chosen mainly for practical reasons. A mixed methodology is compatible with the transformative-emancipatory paradigm, which pursues social justice principles (Mertens, 2003), but social justice does not necessarily prescribe a mixed methodology. The social justice framework generally favours an interpretive approach above objectivist approaches (Greene, 1998). However, in this study, within the paradigm of the social justice framework, a mixed methodology is permissible and more fitting from a practical perspective in order to obtain more coherent data.

Pragmatism was also not chosen as the research paradigm. Following a pragmatic, well-rounded approach of mixed methods is not a value base, according to House and Howe (1999). House and Howe further argue that practicality, although useful as an approach, is not a good end per se. It needs to answer to the values and principles of the study.

From the social justice standpoint, a mixed methodology essentially brings together qualitative and quantitative data of participants' experience to give a complete picture (Sosulski & Lawrence, 2008). Sosulski and Lawrence (2008) advocate quantitative methods for consistency and qualitative methods to bring a depth of understanding. They describe two American welfare studies where a singular approach in each study would only have shown a partial picture. They are also confident that mixed methods supports social justice goals, by including an interpretive and a generalisable component.

The current research forms part of an overarching longitudinal evaluative study that was conducted in parallel and in three parts to evaluate the CSI module. The first part (the current study) is a quantitative and qualitative research survey; the second component consists of individual qualitative interviews and the third part of the study was performed by engaging students in small focus groups in online chat forums.

It was expected that many of the students who completed the module might not currently be living or working in the Western Cape or even South Africa. Bearing those facts in mind, a survey was deemed the most cost-effective way to examine the maximum number of students' perspectives of the CSI module (Delport, 2005) as it could be distributed to a large number of participants and the location of the students would not matter. Students received an email with a web link to the web-based questionnaire. They also received weekly follow-up emails, to encourage and remind them to complete the questionnaire, as research has shown that follow-up contact can increase response rates (Moore & Tarnai, 2002; Vehovar, Batagelj, Manfreda & Zaletel, 2002). The web-based version was preferred because of its speed, low cost and convenience, including the ease of data capturing and data retrieval from web-based questionnaires (Birnbbaum, 2000).

Potential disadvantages of a web-based study include computer literacy and skill of the participants as well as the researcher and access to computers and the internet (Thomas, 2004). Since the module was partially web-based (Rohleder, Bozalek, et al., 2008) it was assumed that all the participants have the necessary

computer skills to complete the survey. While access is potentially a big problem in this study, it was assumed that the participants who are still studying, as well as those who are employed, would have reasonable access to computers and the internet. The university provided information technology support to assist the researcher with web-related technical problems.

4.5 Target population and sample

All the module's students that could be reached received the email, asking them to complete the questionnaire. It aimed to provide a broader picture of what students believed they learned and gained from the module. Over the past three years a large number of students participated in the course (N = 282). Ten international exchange students who participated in the course were completely excluded from the study because their experience may differ substantially from the South African students. These exchange students, who studied psychology, come from European and Asian countries where diversity and community have different presentations and implications.

Table 4.1 contains a summary of participants' demographic information for each respective year.

Table 4.1

Demographic information of all CSI students (N = 282)

		Year	2006	2007	2008	Total
Discipline	Psychology		41	14	13	68
	Social work		50	44	54	148
	Occupational therapy	N/A		44	22	66
Gender	Female		78	93	77	248
	Male		13	9	12	34
Race	African		19	30	36	85
	Coloured		43	58	35	136
	White		29	14	6	49
	Indian				2	2
	Not specified				10	10
Language	African		17	30	30	77
	Afrikaans		46	22	16	84
	English		28	50	41	119
	Other		0	0	3	3
Total			91	102	89	282

In 2006, the group consisted of 41 psychology students from SUN and 50 social work students from UWC. In 2007 and 2008, only 14 and 13 psychology students respectively participated in the module together with the 44 and 54 social work students and the 44 and 22 occupational therapy students, respectively.

There are three reasons why there were apparently so few psychology students in the module from 2007 onwards. In 2006, both fourth-year students from the B.Psych degree and students doing the elective community psychology honours module at SUN participated. The B.Psych degree was discontinued after 2006. Apart from the fact that few people are usually selected for an honours degree in psychology, the community psychology module that students had to do to gain access to the CSI module was also an elective module.

Every year the female students were in the majority ($n = 78, 93, 81$ for the respective years), outnumbering the male students by far ($n = 13, 9, 12$). The 2006 group consisted of 19 African, 43 coloured and 29 white participants. There were 30 African, 58 coloured and 14 white students who participated in 2007. In 2008, 11 students chose not to specify their race, with two indicating Indian, 36 African, 35 coloured and 9 white. In the first year, 17 students reported that an African language was their first language. Afrikaans was 46 students' first language and 28 students spoke English as their first language. In 2007, 30 students spoke an African language as first language, with 22 students reporting Afrikaans and 50 students reporting English, as their first languages. Of the 2008 participants, 77 indicated an African language as first language, 16 indicated Afrikaans, 41 indicated English and three indicated that they spoke another language as their first language.

The following table (Table 4.2) gives the percentages that each category represents of the total population that participated in the CSI module from 2006 to 2008.

Table 4.2

Percentages of the total population (N = 282) in each category

		N	%
Discipline	Psychology	68	24
	Social work	148	52
	Occupational therapy	66	23
Gender	Female	248	88
	Male	34	12
Race	African	85	30
	Coloured	136	48
	White	49	17
	Indian	2	1
	Not specified	10	4
Language	African	77	27
	Afrikaans	84	30
	English	119	42
	Other	3	1

Just more than half of the participants, 52% (n = 148), were social work students. The psychology students made up 24% (n = 68) of the participants and the occupational therapy students 23% (n = 66). The majority of the students were female (n = 248; 88%) and only 12% (n = 34) were male. Of all the participants, 30% (n = 85) indicated their race as African, with 48% (n = 136) choosing coloured and 17% (n = 49) choosing white as categories. Two participants (1%) indicated their race as Indian and 10 (4%) chose the “not specified” category. English was the most common language, spoken by 42% (n = 119) at home, followed by Afrikaans, spoken by 30% (n = 84) and an African language, which is spoken by 27% (n = 77). Three participants indicated that they have another home language, making up the last 1% of the target population.

The actual study sample was made up of the participants (n = 23) from this population who completed the questionnaire. While 23 out of 282 is a low response rate (8%), it is very difficult to determine what the true number of aware units is. Vehovar et al. (2002) refer to aware units as individuals that have received the questionnaire and are aware of it, in contrast to someone who overlooks or accidentally deletes the questionnaire. This group of 23 also survived email address typing errors and email accounts that have expired. There was only one known case in the population of email addresses used to email the link to the questionnaire, where an email address was given or recorded incorrectly. This became apparent when the researcher sent participants a test email from a normal email account instead of the survey server. The survey server did not report whether emails reached their destination or not. The test email was sent to inform participants that reported difficulties with the survey had been addresses and that their own email

servers might put the survey invitation in the spam folder instead of their inbox. This email also again encouraged participants to participate in the survey.

This test email showed that at least 62 email addresses were invalid. One of these faulty addresses was a new one, obtained from a participant that the researchers could reach, which must have been read or captured incorrectly. This is not uncommon (Vehovar et al., 2002). The other 61 addresses were student number addresses that had expired, due to those participants leaving the university. It is unclear if the remaining 220 addresses were all active or whether some of their error messages were absorbed in the system and not delivered to the researcher. Out of 220 or less possible informed units, 23 respondents equal a 10% response rate. As Smith (2002) argued, many survey companies never clearly state how they define a response rate or what an acceptable level of response is.

Of the aware units, some choose not to complete the survey, some start the survey but do not complete it and some, 23 in this case, completes the survey (Vehovar et al., 2002). This group of 23 constitutes the sample. The following table compares the composition of the sample with the population, giving the percentages of each grouping present in the sample as well as the population.

Table 4.3
Demographic information of sample compared with population

		Sample	% of sample	Total population	% of population	% of population present in sample
Discipline	Psychology	15	65	68	24	22
	Social work	4	17	148	52	3
	Occupational therapy	4	17	66	23	6
Gender	Female	21	91	248	88	8
	Male	2	9	34	12	6
Race	African	3	13	85	30	4
	Coloured	10	43	136	48	7
	White	10	43	49	17	20
	Indian	0	0	2	1	0
	Not specified	N/A	N/A	10	4	N/A
Language	African	2	9	77	27	3
	Afrikaans	7	30	84	30	8
	English	14	61	119	42	12
	Other	0	0	3	1	0
Total		23	100	282	100	8

Of all the participants that responded, 65% ($n = 15$) were psychology students. In the total population, there were 68, which constituted 24% of the population. Therefore, 22% of the psychology students that participated completed the questionnaire. Four social work and four occupational therapy students responded, each representing 17% of the sample. In total 148 students (52%) studied social work and thus 3% of the social work students responded to the questionnaire. Twenty-three percent of the population ($n = 66$) studied occupational therapy and so 6% of that segment of the population is represented.

Ninety-one percent of the respondents are female ($n = 21$), while 88% of the population is female ($n = 248$) and 8% of the female population responded to the questionnaire. The two male respondents (9% of the sample) represented 6% of the male population, which was 12% of the total population ($n = 34$).

Three respondents indicated their race as African, representing 13% of the sample. In the course, 30% ($n = 85$) indicated African as their race and so 4% of this section of the population is represented in the sample. Of the sample, 43% indicated their race as coloured ($n = 10$) and the other 43% as white ($n = 10$). There were 136 students (48%) in the population who identified their race as coloured and 49 (17%) who identified it as white. Therefore 7% of the population that chose coloured as a self-identified category, is present in the sample and 20% of the population that chose white, is represented in the study sample. No respondents in the sample indicated their race as Indian. One percent of the total population ($n = 2$) indicated their race as Indian. The category of "not specified" was not available in the questionnaire, because only students from the third year indicated their race themselves. For the other two years, the demographic information from the respective universities was used, which does not have the "not specified" category. There were 10 participants (4%) in the total population who chose that category.

Two respondents (9%) had an African language as first language, while 27% of the population ($n = 77$) speak an African language. Therefore, the sample has 3% of the African first language population. There were 7 (30%) participants in the sample and 30% ($n = 84$) of the population who spoke Afrikaans as first language, with the sample constituting 8% of the total Afrikaans first language population. English was chosen by 14 participants (61%) from the sample and by 119 (42%) of the population as their first language. The sample thus represented 12% of the population that speak English as first language. No participants in the sample indicated a different first language and only 1% ($n = 3$) of the total population did. This 1% is not the exchange students who were excluded, but other students who reported having other first languages.

In total, 23 participants completed the questionnaire. Excluding the international exchange students, the size of the population is 282. Thus, the sample represents 8% of the total population or 10% of the informed units (Vehovar et al., 2002).

Table 4.4

Representation of respective years in sample

Year	Frequency	Percentage
2006	5	22
2007	6	26
2008	12	52
Total	23	100

The number of participants from 2006 ($n = 5$, 22%) is almost equal to the number of participants from 2007 ($n = 6$, 26%). The majority of the participants ($n = 12$, 52%) completed the module in 2008.

4.6 Instrument

The web-based questionnaire program, Checkbox 4.5.3.55, was used to construct the survey. It is hosted by Stellenbosch University as a tool for its research.

The questionnaire contains qualitative as well as quantitative questions, in an attempt to obtain a more complete picture (De Vos, 2005a). Therefore, the questionnaire has open-ended as well as closed questions. Closed questions are useful because participants have a clearer idea of what kind of response the researcher needs and for the researcher, the data are analysed more quickly (Delpont, 2005). However, closed questions run the risk of missing important information that the researcher may not have considered. It is therefore important to include open questions in any survey. They explore the variables more effectively and give a broad range of responses (Delpont, 2005). It gives participants the opportunity to provide the whole spectrum of answers and is useful in this kind of exploratory research. Open-ended questions also minimise the chance of the researcher to lead the questions and create response bias (Goodwin, 2002). On the other hand, open-ended questions tend to lengthen the time it takes to complete the questionnaire as well as to analyse the data (Delpont, 2005).

The questionnaire also comprises a variety of question formats, such as ranking items, multiple choice and fill-in answers. Although some researchers feel this can be confusing and time-consuming to complete such a survey (Cox, 1996), the different formats and question types ask of the participants to read the questions more carefully and minimise boredom.

To prevent item non-response, described as items that participants do not answer or leave out (Dillman, Eltinge, Groves, & Little, 2002), the questionnaire is designed so that every question on each page has to be completed before respondents can progress to the next page. Unfortunately, the design of the questionnaire does not allow the researchers to monitor or classify unit non-response into the categories that Groves et al. (2002) suggest -namely no request, refusal and incapacity.

The basic structure of the questionnaire includes a section for demographic information, like age, race and profession. This information is important to describe and understand whom the sample consists of and whether the sample is reflective of the population of students who took the module (Strydom, 2005). It also includes students' preliminary opinion of the CSI module, to be triangulated (Neuendorf, 2002) with students' evaluation of the module later in the questionnaire.

The second section focuses on the CSI module and what participants remember about this module. Questions start broadly, with a simple yes/no question in the beginning and then elaborate in the following items.

In the third section, participants are asked to describe their current work environment regarding diversity or difference. They are then asked to relate how, if at all, the CSI module prepared them for this environment.

The last section asks of participants to evaluate the module: the strengths and challenges and whether they would recommend it. This last section aims to provide an overview of the effectiveness of the module, from the perspective of people who have some experience of the working world.

A copy of the questionnaire is attached in Appendix A.

4.7 Analysis

Built on principles of social justice education, as explained in Chapter 2, the analysis was done from a pragmatic mixed methods approach (Morgan, 2007). The reason for this was that qualitative and quantitative methods each highlight different aspects and combining them formed a more rounded and complete impression.

The participants' responses to the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively, using SPSS version 14, as well as qualitatively, using content analysis to examine the themes emerging from their perception and experience of the course, as well as that of their current environments (De Vos, 2005b; Mertens, 1998).

While authors like Neuendorf (2002) argue that content analysis is a quantitative research method per se, others, like Krippendorff (2004) suggest that quantification is neither a criterion of valid research nor content analysis, since reading is fundamentally a qualitative process. He defines content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 18). Krippendorff also quotes Webster's Dictionary of the English Language (1961 edition) referring to the analysis of manifest as well as latent content to determine the meaning and effect of the chosen text.

Content analysis was chosen as this technique can provide new insights, increase the understanding of a phenomenon and inform practical action (Krippendorff, 2004). This added to the aim of this study, which was conducted in the hope of gaining new insight into the CSI module's effect and increase the understanding of

how students experienced it. Furthermore, it was hoped to inform future modules for students in the health professions.

The method was applied to obtain deeper information, in line with Krippendorff's (2004) definition of content analysis. There will usually be information with counts and frequencies, such as the number of participants who would recommend the module, as Neuendorf (2002) recommends. However, the method is also used to examine various themes that emerge in more depth and detail than only counting the number of times a particular word or phrase occurs. Neuendorf (2002) concedes that empiricism, based on concrete observation research, in qualitative enquiry could have valuable applications too.

The process of content analysis has developed into a collection of different methods for different uses, which includes qualitative and quantitative approaches (Krippendorff, 2004). The process would be similar for quantitative and qualitative content analysis, but the following description adopted a qualitative approach:

Firstly, the qualitative content analysis was a hermeneutic or interpretive process. It used the known literature to give context to or interpret the readings of the given texts, in this case the participants' responses to the questions in the questionnaire (Krippendorff, 2004). The texts were recontextualised, reinterpreted and redefined until the researcher reached an adequate interpretation.

Another important consideration is that the qualitative content analysis does not have to follow a particular sequence during analysis. Researchers can and do go back and forth between texts, to formulate an interpretation that does justice to the text (Krippendorff, 2004), as was the case for this study.

Acknowledging multiple interpretations and perspectives is one of the most significant differences between qualitative and quantitative content analysis. The measurement model suggests that there is a single reading of each text, preferring to assign single numbers to texts (Krippendorff, 2004). Likewise, the participants' responses can be interpreted in various ways. In the present study, from the perspective of determining the value and impact of the CSI module, the researcher read it through particular lenses. Neuendorf (2002) would probably describe this study's methodology as interpretative analysis rather than content analysis, as she insists on quantification as criteria for content analysis.

Quotes from participants' responses and literature were used, as can be seen in Chapter 5 and 6, to collaborate the interpretations of the texts, as suggested by Krippendorff (2004).

4.8 Validity

Qualitative content analysis does not rely on criteria like reliability or validity in the strictest sense to accept research (Krippendorff, 2004), as it is agreed that different researchers may make different inferences from the same texts and that each text has multiple possible meanings. Therefore, qualitative content analysis uses other means like triangulation and reflexivity to establish reliability and validity.

As a student of the CSI module during 2008, I had a very special and enriching experience. I grew in awareness of my own identity, self and communities. I also gained a new appreciation for the community, self and identity of others, like Halabi and Sonnenschein (2000) have experienced in their work. During this present study, I had to be aware of the distinction between my own experience and that of the participants, thereby not ascribing my experience to them or biasing the findings.

The questionnaire was designed with triangulation in mind, where some questions in the qualitative section resemble questions in the quantitative section (Morgan, 2007), to compare and confirm the research findings.

4.9 Ethics

This study had received ethical approval from the University of Western Cape Ethics Review Committee, as the overall study was part of a SANPAD (South Africa Netherlands Development Programme) project, where the principal researcher, Prof. Bozalek, is located at the University of the Western Cape.

Due to the nature of the questions in the questionnaire, it was expected to have a minimal risk of causing any discomfort or distress.

In the introductory email, that also contained the link to the questionnaire, the aim and implications of the survey were explained. It also served as a consent form, informing participants of the study and asking for their consent. Participants consented by following the link to the questionnaire.

An incentive for completing the questionnaire was offered. Participants had the option to enter a lucky draw for a R250 shopping voucher for a national supermarket chain. The names of two of the participants who completed the questionnaire were drawn and they each received a voucher. Research has shown that incentives do increase participation rates, without adversely affecting the quality of the responses (Moore & Tarnai, 2002; Singer, 2002). While some recommend prepaid incentives, for example in mail surveys, the researchers chose an incentive lottery for this study, which has also proved to be effective in some cases (Singer, 2002).

4.10 Summary

This chapter described the methodology that the study used to examine students' perception of the past module as well as the effect it had on their conception of community, self and identity. It started with the background to the study, including the greater CSI project.

The focus of this particular study and the research questions were explained. The rationale for choosing a mixed methodology, namely to get a more complete impression, as well as using a web-based survey was clarified in this chapter. It also included the demographic information of the target population of students who completed the module and the sample of 23 students who agreed to participate.

The internet survey and survey items were described, along with what the researcher hoped to learn from each section. The chapter also explained the quantitative and qualitative methods used to analyse the responses.

As various qualitative interpretations are possible, the validity of this study lay in triangulation and reflexivity. That is why it is important that I mentioned that I was also a student of the CSI module. Triangulation was achieved with various parts of the survey that correspond.

This chapter also mentioned the ethical considerations, including informed consent and the minimal risk of potential distress. To encourage participation, participants were offered the option to enter an incentive lottery.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of an analysis of all the participants' responses to the questionnaire. It contains the statistical analysis of the quantitative section's responses, comparing various aspects of difference. These questions enquired about participants' current environments, as well as whether they felt that the CSI module prepared them for dealing with the different aspects of diversity. The qualitative questions covered their experiences of the module, including what participants thought they learned from the module. Those responses were analysed to see which themes emerged. These quantitative and qualitative findings are integrated, interpreted and discussed in the subsequent chapters.

5.2 Quantitative results

The responses of the 23 participants were analysed using the computer data analysis software program SPSS, version 17.0. The analysis followed the same order as the questionnaire and is divided under subheadings for participants' memory, their experience, their current environment and their appraisal of the module's value.

5.2.1 Memory of the CSI module

To put participants at ease and get them thinking about the CSI module, the questionnaire started with questions about how well students remembered the module and what type of experience it was for them. These questions were also useful, albeit in a limited way, to monitor validity. Sosulski and Lawrence (2008) recommend using triangulation of different parts of the questionnaire to confirm validity. If participants were to report that they remember nothing about the module, the validity of their responses would be questionable. Alternatively, when asked directly, a participant might have responded that it was a positive experience, while the answers from the qualitative section might indicate otherwise. Such responses would warrant further investigation.

The summary of participants' memory of the CSI module is put forth in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1

Frequencies and percentages of participants' reported memory of the CSI module

Memory	Frequency	Percentage
Clearly and vividly	17	74
Vaguely	6	26
Not at all	0	0
Total	23	100

A majority of 74% (n = 17) reported that they remembered the CSI module clearly and vividly, while six participants (26%) reported that they remembered it vaguely. No participants reported that they did not remember the module at all.

Participants were also asked to rate their general experience of the module. This rating is shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

Participants' rating of the module

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	16	70
Negative	0	0
Both	6	26
Neither	1	4
Total	23	100

The CSI module was rated as a positive experience for most participants (n = 16, 70%), while no participants rated it solely as a negative experience. It was a mixed experience for six of the participants (26%), who rated it both positive and negative and one student (4%) felt that it was neither positive nor negative.

These responses were analysed to determine if there were any significant correlations between any of the three variables, namely the year the CSI module was completed, how well the CSI module was remembered and the experience rating. If a positive correlation was established, it may have implied that the course was experienced substantially differently across the three years. According to Field (2007), Kendall's τ is more suitable to smaller non-parametric samples, specifically where many of the variables might have the same ranking, as in this case. Table 5.3 below reflects the statistics obtained.

Table 5.3

Correlation between the year completed, how well the course is remembered and the rating of the experience.

Kendall's τ		Year	Remember	Experience
Year CSI was completed	Correlation coefficient	1.000	-.303	-.289
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.134	.146
	N	23	23	23
How well the CSI module is remembered	Correlation coefficient	-.303	1.000	.283
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.134	.	.177
	N	23	23	23
Rating of the experience	Correlation coefficient	-.289	.283	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.146	.177	.
	N	23	23	23

The year the CSI module was completed did not correlate significantly with how well the module is remembered, $\tau = -.303$, nor with the rating of the experience, $\tau = -.289$. There was also no significant correlation between the rating of the experience and how well the CSI module was remembered, $\tau = .283$.

5.2.2 Participant's experience of collaboration

Since the CSI module was a new initiative, participants were asked whether the module was their first experience of cooperation across the selected dimensions of difference. The results are summarised in Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4

CSI module as first experience of cooperation across various aspects of difference

Aspect of difference	Yes	%	No	%
Age	1	4	22	96
Discipline	13	57	10	44
Gender	0	0	23	100
Institution	23	100	0	0
Language	1	4	22	96
Race	0	0	23	100
Religion	0	0	23	100

Only one participant (4%) reported that it was the first experience of cooperation across age, while 22 participants (96%) reported that it was not. For 57% (n = 13) of the participants it was their first experience of cooperation across disciplines and 10 (44%) reported that they had cooperated with people from different disciplines before. No participant reported that it was their first experience of cooperation across genders, religions or races, whereas all the participants reported that it was their first experience of cooperation with individuals from a different institution. One participant (4%) responded that it was the first experience of cooperation across different languages, while the rest (n = 22, 96%) reported that they had previously cooperated across different languages.

The next question in the questionnaire gave an indication as to whether the participants felt that the CSI module had changed their perception of collaboration. The results are given in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5

Changed perception of collaboration across specific aspects of difference

Aspect of difference	Yes	%	No	%
Age	6	26	17	74
Discipline	15	65	8	35
Gender	7	30	16	70
Institution	16	70	7	30
Language	9	39	14	61
Race	12	52	11	48
Religion	11	48	12	52

Although only one participant reported that it was the first experience of collaborating across age, in Table 5.4, in Table 5.5 it is evident that six participants (26%) reported that the module changed their perception of this collaboration. The majority (n = 17, 74%) reported that their perception of collaboration across age was not changed by the module. Their perception of collaboration across different disciplines was changed, according to 15 participants (65%), while 35% (n = 8) did not feel that the module changed it. For seven participants (30%), the CSI module changed their perception of collaboration across gender, but most of the participants (n = 16, 70%) did not feel that way. On the other hand, the participants (n = 16, 70%) generally felt that the module changed their perception of collaboration with people from different institutions, with seven participants (30%) disagreeing. A number of participants (n = 9, 39%) reported that the module changed their perception of collaboration between different languages, but the majority (n = 14, 61%) reported that it did not. For collaboration across both race and religion, close to half of the participants agreed that their perception changed (n = 12, 52% and n = 11, 48% respectively) because of the CSI module.

Thus, while many participants reported that the CSI module was not their first experience of collaboration across some of the aspects difference, they still agreed that the module changed their perception of such collaboration.

5.2.3 Participants' current environment

The next section of the questionnaire addressed participants' current environment. To get an accurate representation of participants' current environment, they were asked to indicate whether they were working or studying. Their responses are summarised in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6

Participants' current occupation

Occupation	Working		Studying	Unemployed
	Field studied	Different field		
Participants	9	4	10	0

More than half of the participants ($n = 13$, 57%) are working. The four participants that indicated that they are working in a different field from what they studied were all psychology students. The other participants reported that they were studying ($n = 10$, 43%). No participant indicated being unemployed.

Mindful of the kind of environment participants were in, they were asked to rate their environments in terms of various aspects. The following graphs summarise and display their responses.

Due to the categorical nature of the quantitative data, it was not appropriate to draw true trend lines in these graphs. It was also inappropriate because the categories are discrete, with no middle ground in between. The graphs represent the frequencies that a particular score, ranging from 1 to 5 or 1 to 7 depending on the graph, was given to each aspect of difference. These frequency data points were connected for each aspect, to make comparisons between the categories and their rankings clearer. This enabled us to make useful inferences from these graphs.

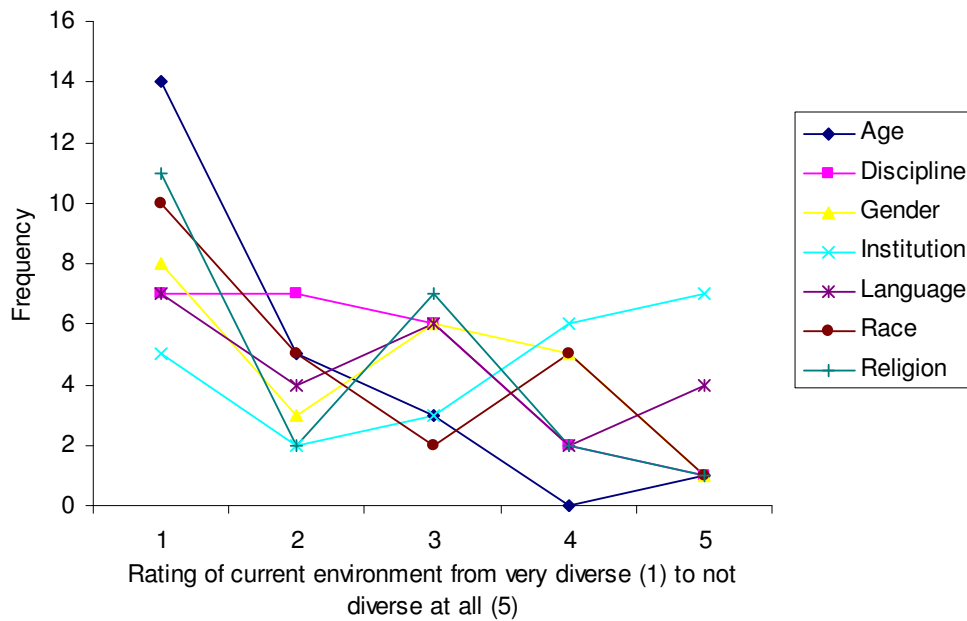


Figure 5.1

Summary of participants' rating of the diversity of their current environment with regards to aspects of difference.

In general participants rated their environment as very diverse (allocating a score of 1 or 2 out of 5) with regards to age, as can be seen in Figure 5.1. According to their ratings, they felt that diversity in terms of discipline was present in their current environment, although less than age diversity. Concerning gender, participants' rating of their environments' gender diversity was quite evenly distributed. There was much less institutional diversity mentioned, as participants rated their environment as having little institutional diversity. Like gender diversity, language diversity was also quite evenly distributed between the rating categories. Participants reported that their environment was quite diverse in terms of race. They also felt that their environments were rather diverse concerning religion, with only three participants allocating a score of 4 or 5, indicating below average diversity in terms of religion for those three participants.

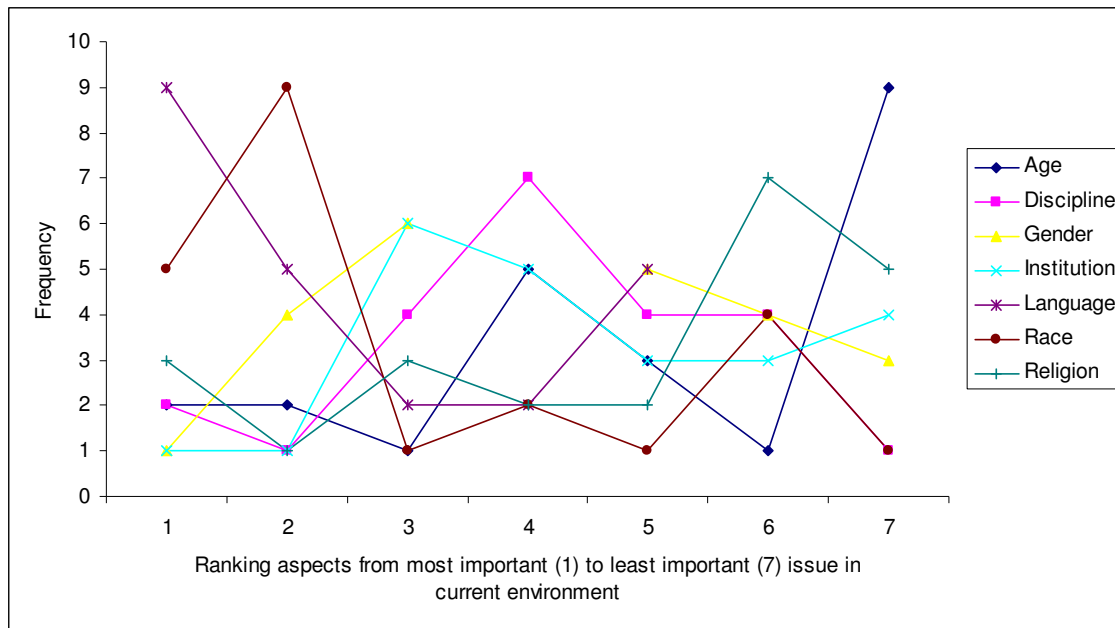


Figure 5.2

Summary of ranking of the measure that each of the various aspects are a contentious issue or source of conflict or tension in their current environment.

In this graph, Figure 5.2, it is evident that language was seen as the most contentious issue. No participants ranked it as the least important issue. Race is highlighted as the second main source of conflict or tension, starting with a very high frequency of ranking as the most or second most contentious issue and declining towards the right. Gender and discipline, as well as institution to a lesser extent, were ranked as average sources of conflict or tension, since all three show an increased frequency in the centre. Age and religion both have low frequencies in the first categories but increased towards the end, indicating that they were the least contentious issues.

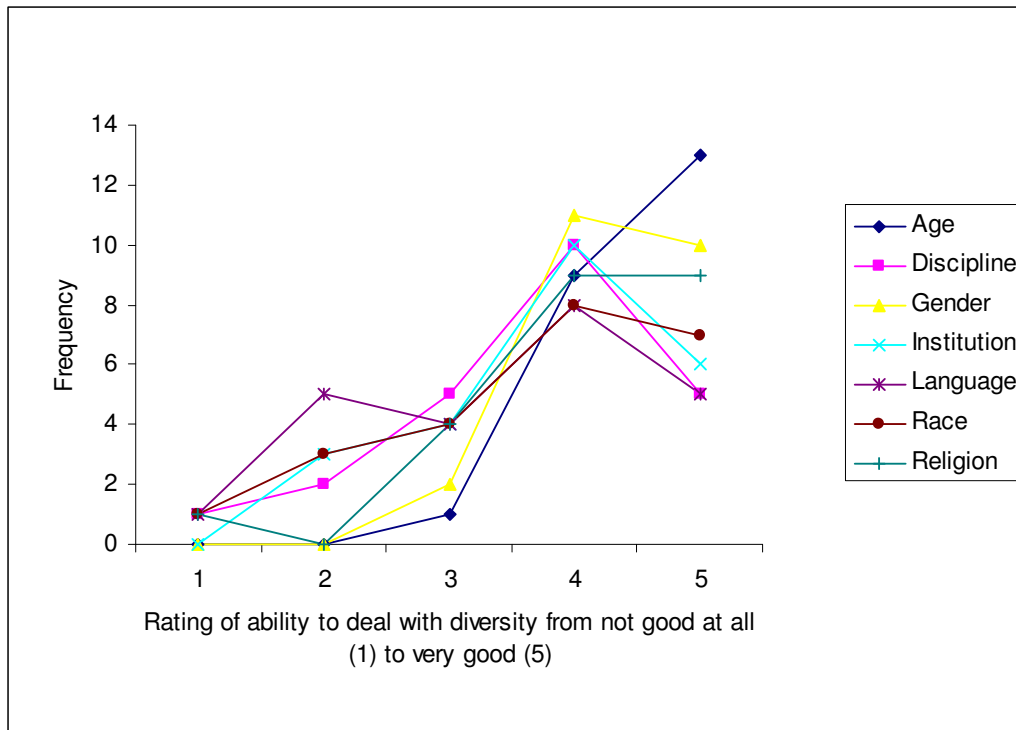


Figure 5.3

Participants' rating of their own ability to deal effectively with different aspects of diversity.

Participants seemed mostly confident in their own ability to deal with diversity, according to Figure 5.3. They rated their ability to deal effectively with age the highest, with no one allocating a 1 or a 2 and 13 allocating a 5, indicating that they rated themselves as very good at dealing with it. The ability to deal with gender was rated the second highest. Discipline, institution, race and religion were aspects of diversity for which participants generally indicated that they possess the capability to deal with them. Participants indicated the least confidence in their own ability to deal effectively with language. However, half of the participants still scored their ability to deal with language diversity with a 4 or a 5.

5.2.4 Participants' evaluation of the CSI module

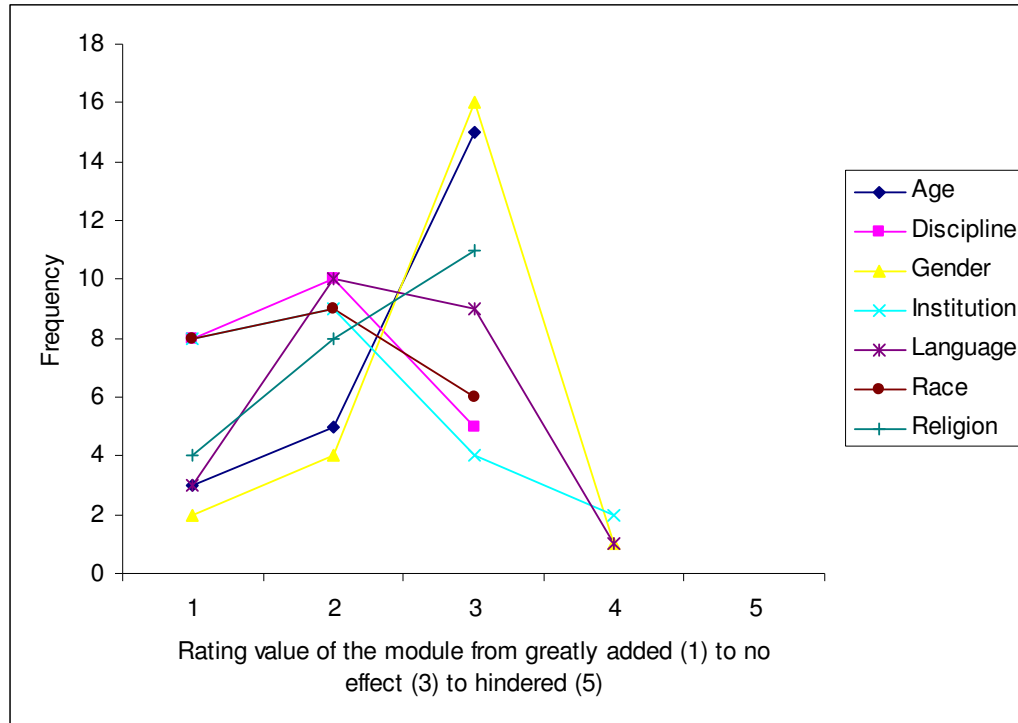


Figure 5.4

Participants' rating of whether the module added or hindered to their ability to deal effectively with diversity.

Overall, Figure 5.4 shows that participants felt that the module added to their ability to deal effectively with diversity; some even reported that it had helped them greatly. However, some did not experience it as such. Four different participants indicated that it almost hindered their ability to deal with gender, language or institution. Participants rated the module's value highly for improving their ability to deal with diversity in discipline, institution and race. Most participants felt the module had no effect on their ability to deal with diversity in gender ($n = 16$) or age ($n = 15$) and a lesser effect on their ability to deal with religious diversity. They also indicated a mixed response to the module's value in terms of dealing effectively with language diversity.

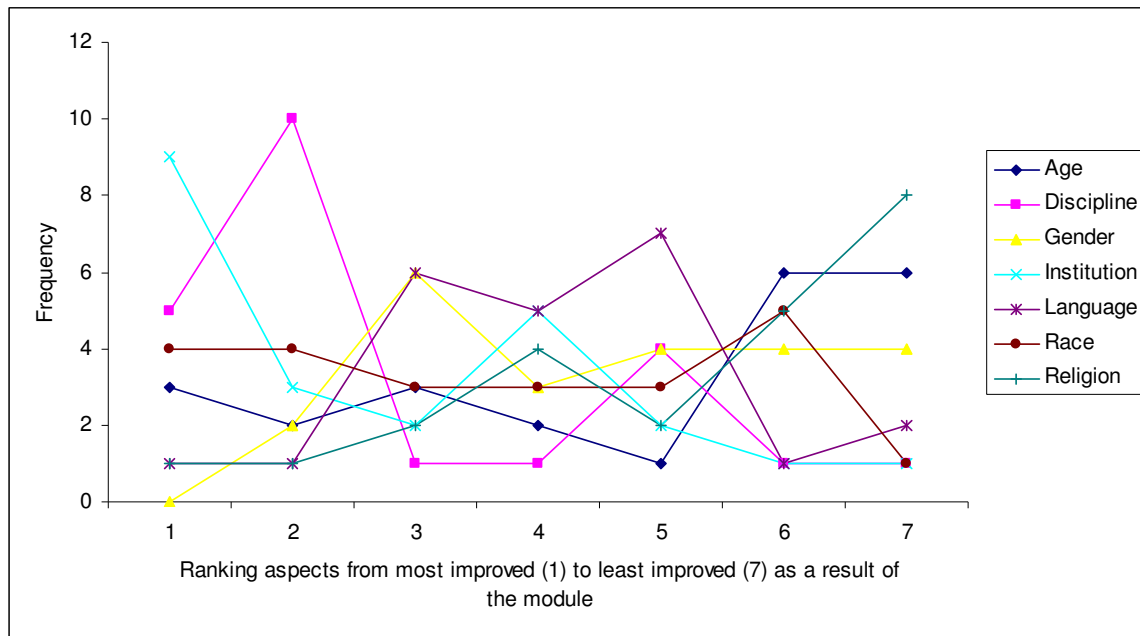


Figure 5.5

Summary of the ranking of the extent to which coping with the aspects of diversity improved due to the CSI module.

Participants reported the greatest improvement in their ability to deal with diversity in discipline and institution, compared to the other aspects listed, as shown in Figure 5.5. These two aspects received the most scores of 1 or 2. Their ability to deal with racial diversity was spread over all the possible ranking positions, indicating that some felt it had improved a lot, some felt the improvement was average and others reporting their skills for coping with racial diversity improved the least. The rise in the middle in the ranking of gender diversity and especially language diversity indicated that participants felt their ability to deal with these two aspects improved somewhat. Their improvement due the module was at least more than what participants indicated regarding their ability to deal with age diversity and religion diversity. According to the participants, their ability in coping with these two aspects, age and religion diversity, improved the least.

Researchers do not always agree about the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies (Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorf, 2002). For the purpose of this study, the distinction is based on the format of the questionnaire: questions that only required participants to select an option are described under quantitative results and questions that required typing, even a “yes” or a “no” are described in the following section.

5.3 Qualitative results

Qualitative responses were analysed per participant to elicit themes emerging for each particular participant regarding their personal experience. The responses were analysed per question as well, to understand the

general CSI experiences and to answer some specific questions, including the module's weaknesses and merits for example.

With the analysis of all the responses per participant, a distinct theme emerged for nearly every participant. Often, these themes were evident in nearly every response of a participant, regardless of the question. Some of these emerging themes overlapped between participants and others were more specific to the participant. This also helped to determine the kind of experience that each participant had, for example positive or negative, to compare with the questions in the quantitative section.

The answers in the two sections related well. The single participant, who responded that the module was neither positive nor negative, did not laud the module in the qualitative section either, for example mentioning that the CSI module "was unnecessary" (F, C, Afr, PSY, 06, 23).¹

She also reported that she would not recommend it to others. The other participant that would not recommend the module felt that it was not structured very well.

The themes that emerged for the different individual participants as well as overall were gained knowledge and gained understanding. The process of interaction also came up frequently, as well as an awareness of commonalities and community as well as differences between individuals and groups.

Participants recalled the knowledge they had gained and were grateful for this knowledge. This included self-knowledge, practical skills, like interpersonal and computer skills, and increased awareness of difference and issues or controversy related to these differences. They also mentioned gaining increased confidence in their skill of dealing with difference effectively.

I have become more aware of diversity and what that means and have learnt to talk more openly about it with confidence and to share options better and learn from others. It is more natural because I have been exposed to the CSI module therefore I am more open to face diversity issues where I would not have been as confident to approach these issues before (F, W, Afr, PSY, 06, 22).

I learned to use the internet as a learning/communication tool more extensively than I had ever before. It was a thoroughly interesting process to communicate with a huge range of people and a large component of the academic process online. I was exposed to theory in a very intensive manner and learned how to make the link between theoretical constructs and practical applications in a very concrete way (F, W, Eng, PSY, 07, 17).

Personal growth, self-awareness, awareness of others and how all of these factors integrate into each individuals conceptualisation of community (F, C, Eng, PSY, 08, 10).

¹ The code indicates the gender, the race (C for coloured, B for Black African and W for white), the language, the discipline (OT for occupational therapy, PSY for psychology and SW for social work), the year the participant completed the CSI module and a number between 1 and 23 assigned to identify each participant.

These participants describe what they had gained from the CSI module. Between these three students, it was clear that they feel they have gained much knowledge and knowledge of many different kinds.

The other gain that came up repeatedly was that of understanding. Participants frequently referred to acquiring greater understanding of others that differ from themselves. This new understanding also brought new insight into the thought and actions of others, some perspective on people's actions and respect for all people. As one student explained about the value of the CSI module:

It is more special if you will be working with people, understanding diversity will help to understand, identify, treat everyone with respect and always have a good approach to and always appropriate to the individually (F, B, Eng, OT, 07, 20).

Another student described what she gained:

I learnt about the interdependence of the three occupations, it changed my perception about social work. I realised that psychology is not better or superior but different (F, C, Eng, PSY, 08, 11).

For her, this understanding had helped her value each discipline for its contribution to clients' well-being.

It was enjoyable and gave great insight into the lives of other people in our community that come from different backgrounds. This may be useful to a psychology student. Also, the different views of the students studying different yet related courses, was refreshing (F, W, Afr, PSY, 08, 13).

Another participant echoed her by saying:

Greater understanding DOES bring insight and with that insight tolerance of difference and a greater desire to cooperate (F, W, Eng, PSY, 07, 17) (original emphasis).

Understanding and awareness of oneself, others and the shared history are important to work towards transformation (Freire, 2000). Knowledge, reflection and the action in praxis all have to be part of Freire's (2000) true liberation. The knowledge and understanding that some participants gained from the CSI module resembles the ingredients that Freire requires for a socially just society.

Many students also cherished the opportunity for interaction. For participants, the process of exchange and contact with future colleagues, although challenging and dissatisfying at times, was also very meaningful.

The first participant explained the merits of the module, emphasising the interaction and relationships that resulted from it by saying:

It broadens your views, furthers your learning and creates interactional purposes with different disciplines of study and institutions which is brilliant. Forming networking relationships with fellow professionals is awesome (F, C, Eng, SW, 08, 7).

She was positive about the opportunities that the CSI module created.

Two other participants echoed the first participant's sentiments, that "[i]t was beneficial in allowing the interaction between other institutions as well as across disciplines (F, W, Eng, PSY, 07, 3).

A third participant said:

It gives you a better understanding of how to interact with those you come across with (F, C, Afr, SW, 06, 18).

This was her practical answer to the question whether she would recommend the module.

It appears as if all the participants are experts in Allport (1954) and Pettigrew's (1998) contact theory, where interaction or sufficient contact between different, conflicting groups can reduce prejudice and bring understanding, insight and better relationships across differences.

Two other themes that emerged were references to an "other" or the "differences" of "them" and referring to some collective community of "us".

This increased awareness of difference was evident in a few participants' responses. These differences included racial as well as discipline difference. The word "different" appears at least 56 times in the 23 participants' qualitative answers, not counting words like difference and diversity. Clearly, difference was one of the first things that came to mind. The following quotes from their responses illustrate this.

I am of the opinion that it has been valuable for me in terms of my profession. I work with children from different backgrounds, races, communities. The course made me cognizant of my prejudice and this awareness has helped me to deal with clients who are different than myself (F, C, Afr, SW, 08, 1).

Yes, it helps to bring different people from different communities together. I learned a lot from the other people that represented a community different from mine. I found during the course that there were also similarities between the different communities with regards to resources (F, C, Afr, PSY, 08, 6).

Difference in general was salient. It appeared frequently in participants' responses, in interplay with similarities, for example "their" university and so on. This awareness of difference was not necessarily negative. I hope that the CSI module gave the students the necessary knowledge and experience to deal with this difference. The danger lies in excessive othering that leads to stereotyping and discrimination (Suleiman, 2004).

In contrast to the salience of difference, the other theme that appeared frequently in participants' responses was a grouping theme, that of grouping students as "health professionals". With the module's focus on the

concept of community, its definitions and implications, it was interesting that participants realised that they also form a community of health workers.

Many participants felt like the one quoted below:

I found value in the bringing together of like-minded people from different backgrounds, (for me) it showed the strength of community thinking (F, W, Eng, PSY, 08, 19).

Another participant also notes:

It is very interesting to see how the different helping disciplines can function together to serve the community (F, C, Eng, PSY, 07, 8).

This cooperation between the disciplines showed that they can also look past differences, to the common aim of helping people and improving the lives of others. Often, the focus on the common takes the attention off the differences.

5.3.1 Weaknesses of the CSI module

Participants were asked to describe any weaknesses of the CSI module and a response that appeared frequently was that the course duration was too short. They felt that the process was rushed and that an academic term of about six weeks was not long enough, with the workload of the CSI module and other subjects over that time, suggesting that it should rather be taught over a semester. Some students also mentioned the differing work schedules, for example, the occupational therapy students who were doing practical work in the field most days.

There were comments such as "... lack of consistent marking and timeous feedback (F, W, Eng, PSY, 07, 3).

This might indicate that the facilitators' workload over the short period was quite high. Other participants also criticised the facilitators, mentioning that they were not that diverse racially and that they were absent from their groups.

Our particular groups facilitator was not involved or helpful at all. I did feel rather threatened at some points within our meetings as it felt the topic was too focused on blaming across divides for apartheid and not focused on the issue at hand. (F, W, Eng, PSY, 2008, 4)

This confirmed that good facilitating is vital for a meaningful encounter (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004). While the particular student still described the CSI module as a positive experience and Halabi and Sonnenschein (2004) emphasise that such encounter groups could be difficult and even traumatic, they also call for sound facilitation to guide the process.

While some participants were negative about their group facilitators, as seen in the quotation, other participants, from 2008, gave very positive feedback of their facilitators. Other students mentioned how easily they could engage about difficult issues in their groups, without feeling threatened, for example:

I had the opportunity to speak to someone who had done the module two years before me and she said that it had been really difficult to discuss race – something we managed with both ease and urgency when I did the module (F, W, Eng, PSY, 08, 5).

This was in stark contrast with the response of the other participant who reported difficulty and feeling threatened in their group discussions. This participant, who experienced the positive group dialogue, did not mention anything about her facilitator.

Another participant saw the dialogue's potential but was disappointed that it was not taken further:

The first weakness that comes to mind is that it did not necessarily provide a space for which these issues could be taken further than the course itself which meant that any communication that I had with the learners from UWC is now lost as is all the hard work that went into opening those lines of communication. (I realise that I was also lazy in not getting in touch with the learners from UWC, however, it would have been nice if the course had some aspect continuity beyond the module itself. If one could have achieved this it might not have felt so much like a course that I have to finish for marks, but represented more opportunity for open, honest, and continued dialogue.) (M, W, Eng, PSY, 06, 22)

This participant's response shows that at times it only felt like something done for marks and not a learning experience or a democratic dialogue. Although energy spent on a learning experience was not "lost", deeper relationships from such groups could also be valuable, especially to effect long-lasting change.

Participants also mentioned internet access and web-related difficulties, as was reported in the initial evaluations of the module (Bozalek, et al., 2008; Rohleder, Bozalek et al., 2008).

5.3.2 Merits

Most participants were very positive about the module. They were most positive about the meaningful encounters and engagement with the different students. The insight and knowledge gained from these encounters were also highlighted. The CSI module forced participants to do introspection and reflect on their established notions of themselves, identity and community, which added to the meaningful encounter. The guest speakers made a great impact on quite a few participants' CSI experience and they were commended in participants' responses.

Students cherished "[t]he ability to interact and discuss controversial topics with different students and grow and learn from these (F, C, Eng, OT, 08, 16)" in the CSI module. They also found that the module "opened communication lines between the ethnic groups. It provided a safe space in which sensitive topics could

safely be discussed and it forced one not to only see ethnic relations out of ones[sic] own eyes" (M, W, Eng, PSY, 06, 21).

Thus, in contrast with the other student, quoted earlier, who did not have this safe space to conduct a dialogue, these quoted students appreciated the opportunity to engage. This draws attention to the difficulty of constructing a space for interacting and engaging in democratic dialogue (Boler, 2005; Burbules, 2005) that not all participants experience such an event, like a course or a lecture, in the same way, even if they are in the same group. One might perceive as hostile what another may see as positive. Still, the majority of the participants found that the interaction was positive and to their personal and professional advantage. Like quoted earlier, participants reported gaining a lot of knowledge and insight from this interaction.

To realise how much knowledge and insight is gained, reflection is critical, as this participant described:

One does not always have the time to do introspection, but this module in a sense 'forced' one to do so. At times it was scary to face the past and demons that were buried, but at the same time it had a healing effect in the sense that one could have closure on certain issues ... For even in personal issues, that may arise, without realising I have been equipped with skills to look into myself and to understand my [sic] myself, as it makes up a part of my identity (M, C, Eng, OT, 07, 14).

He clearly spoke of much more than just a great module. The CSI module appeared to have taught him much about himself, suggesting that the module, by providing opportunities for reflection, facilitated insight and transformation (Freire, 2000).

The guest speakers for each year differed, also coming from various disciplines, not only the three helping professions, psychology, occupational therapy and social work, which were represented at the module. They discussed topics related to community and identity, often drawing on their own life experiences and struggles. Students really responded positively to these talks. For example, one participant said that what stood out in her mind from the entire module was "the last session when we had the guest speaker in Stellenbosch. The sharing of his life story really touched me" (F, C, Eng, SW, 08, 7).

Most of the participants (n = 21, 91%) also reported that they would recommend the module to other students. This clearly indicated that the students felt the CSI module to be of value.

5.3.3 Perception of community and identity

The CSI module focused on community, self and identity. Thus, participants were asked directly about their perception of these concepts, offering them the chance to type longer answers. Of all the participants, 20 (87%) reported that their perception of the concept "community" has changed as a result of the CSI module and 21 (91%) indicated that the module expanded their view of their identity. As participants elaborated on their understanding of these concepts, it became clear that participants engaged with these concepts, refusing to accept simplistic answers. This can be seen from the following excerpts of answers.

I learnt that there are different kinds of community and each person in my group experienced community differently. My initial opinion was that my community is where I live and operate daily, but I learnt that there are different kinds of communities like UWC, social work, etc. that each operate and function differently (F, C, Eng, PSY, 08, 7).

As one of our lecturers said right at the beginning of the course, there is the assumption of a very specific and generic concept of “community” identity – that of impoverished and disempowered geographical and social groups. This very narrow definition was challenged and replaced by a more expanded and all-encompassing definition which I found extremely helpful (F, W, Eng, PSY, 07, 17).

These quotes of the participants showed how they engaged with the concept of community throughout the module, to reach a deeper understanding of what community encompasses. They also confronted the community stereotypes of “disadvantaged people”.

It did expand my view on identity and I got to know that there are so many things that one can identify with. For example I found myself to identify more with certain aspect of different cultures and that did not make me confused in terms of my identity (F, B, isiX, OT, 08, 2).

Yes, to see that how my background and community I come from actually shapes my identity. I became aware that my identity is more flexible than I what I thought in terms of being able to adjust to other communities and people with a different identity (F, W, Afr, PSY, 06, 22).

Interaction with the different students also taught participants about themselves. Their views about identity became flexible, instead of consisting of a set of fixed criteria. They also became aware how fluid one's identity could be, which would also be necessary to work in different environments with different people. Once a person is comfortable with their own identity, they are better equipped to work with people whose identities differ from theirs (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004). This makes it very important for health professionals to come to terms with their own identities.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter described the results of the longitudinal evaluation questionnaire of the CSI module. The questionnaire aimed to elicit demographic information, to determine the characteristics of the sample, a quantitative section and a section with qualitative questions.

These questions examined participants' memory of the module, enquiring how well they remembered it as well as what kind of experiences they had. There was no correlation between the participants' memory, their experience of the module and the year they completed it.

The following sections enquired whether participants had other experiences of collaboration across difference, before the CSI module, what their current environment looked like in terms of difference, and

their own perceived skill in dealing effectively with diversity. This can give an indication of how necessary they would deem the module to be.

Participants were also asked to rate and rank the contribution of the CSI module to their skills in dealing with difference.

The qualitative questions focused on participants' experience of the module. In their responses, themes such as gaining knowledge, including self-knowledge, practical skills, theory, confidence and awareness; and an increased understanding, with new insight, perspective and resulting respect were identified.

Participants cherished the interaction with other students. There was also interplay between differences between groups and individuals and shared characteristics that all (in a particular group) have in common.

They also described some of the weaknesses and merits that they experienced in the module. The short duration of the module, problems with facilitators, a lack of follow-up and internet problems were mentioned. Despite the weaknesses, participants were generally very positive about the module. They mentioned the chance for interaction, the newly gained knowledge and understanding, the opportunities for challenging reflection and the excellent guest speakers as merits of the CSI module.

Nearly all the participants reported that their perception of the concept of community and their view of their own identity changed for the better because of the module. Most participants would also recommend the module to other students.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter discusses the results of this study. It integrates the quantitative and qualitative results to provide a more complete picture of the participants' experience of the CSI module. It first shows whether they think that there is a need for the type of skills they gained in the CSI module, based on their current environment, their measure of self-confidence in dealing with difference and whether they can identify the module's contribution in their level of self-confidence. These factors would determine how much they value the contribution the CSI module made to their preparation for practice, if at all.

This chapter further elaborates on other perceptions that the participants have of the module, including aspects that they remembered, enjoyed or disliked. It also addresses whether they felt their perception of community and identity changed as a result of the module.

Limitations of this study, especially the low response rate, are discussed. It is also compared with some other web based studies that also reported a low response. This chapter further explains some of the challenges encountered in obtaining contact information and contacting the potential participants. There are also some recommendations for future studies that aim to do follow-up evaluation research.

Since I was a student of the CSI module, I had to be aware of my opinions, experience and personal views about the module. This was to ensure it does not influence the results or the interpretation of the results. Section 6.7 contains some personal reflections on the study.

This chapter brought all the findings of this study together, along with exceptions and applicability. Furthermore, this chapter gives some suggestions for future studies, including questions that remain unanswered and new questions that arose during the course of the study.

6.2 Participants' memory of CSI

The majority of participants reported that they remembered the module clearly and vividly, with a few remembering it vaguely. No participant reported not remembering it at all. However, members of the total population who did not feel they remembered the module sufficiently might have chosen not to participate and excluded themselves from the study. This might also be the case for students who had a very negative perception of the module, as the majority of the participants reported having a positive experience (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2).

About a quarter of the participants reported that they had an ambivalent experience, feeling both positive and negative about the CSI module. This is probably because of the challenges of working so closely in such a small but diverse group and difficulty of dealing with difference and democratic dialogue in general

(Boler, 2004; Dennis & Hemson, 2007; Zembylas, 2008a). A single participant had a neutral experience, that was neither positive nor negative, but in the qualitative section, it became apparent that this participant could not really remember much of the module and did not have a very meaningful experience.

Since there was not a significant correlation between the participants' memory and perception of the module and the year they completed it, it was assumed that the module was experienced fairly similarly across the years, even though the participating disciplines, the presenters and facilitators differed slightly over the three years.

6.3 The perceived need for CSI

It appears as if there were opportunities available for students to cooperate across the aspects of difference. The CSI module was not participants' first experience of collaboration across age, gender, language, race and religion, but that was to be expected. Strangely, two participants reported that it was their first experience of cooperation across age and language respectively. It might be that their groups were particularly diverse in terms of age – with a mature group member, or language – with someone who had a lot of difficulty with English, which was the medium of instruction of the course. Thus, they might have experienced this difference more intensely. Conversely, they might not have realised that other courses that they had completed before had individuals of different ages or languages.

It was also expected that it would be students' first experience of cooperation across institutions and disciplines. While no participants reported previous institutional collaboration experience, almost half of the participants reported that it was not their first experience of cooperation across disciplines. It is not clear whether participants followed another interprofessional course before completing the CSI module, or referred to previous modules that they completed with students from other disciplines, such as general undergraduate psychology modules for example, where each class is filled with students from various degree programmes, but they are all present as psychology students. Interprofessional education differs from modules that various students have together. Interprofessional education acknowledges each profession's presence and potential contribution to solve a problem (Lidskog et al., 2008; Salvatori et al., 2007), compared to degree programmes that merely share a course for practical reasons.

6.3.1 Environment

Close to half of the participants reported that they are studying (see Table 5.6). This could imply that their environment has not changed significantly since they participated in the CSI module and that they still might not appreciate the full value of the CSI module. This did not mean that the module and concepts like identity, community and social justice were not relevant to individuals who are studying. However, universities do tend to differ from reality, with some university campuses still unofficially divided (McKinney, 2004).

The participants rated their environments as very diverse in terms of age and even religion, and the least diverse in terms of institution. However, age was also ranked the least contentious issue, followed closely by

religion. While participants perceived their environments as having average diversity in terms of language and race, these two aspects were clearly the most contentious issues in their current environments (see Figure 5.2). It also appears as if discipline is not that controversial an issue in their current environments, as it was ranked in the middle.

In their qualitative responses participants mentioned racial or cultural difference more frequently than any other particular differences. Thus, while their environments were very diverse in terms of age, they did not experience it to be as challenging as race and language. Apparently environment does not have to be very diverse, for an aspect of difference to be difficult.

In South Africa, most aspects of identity are overshadowed by race and language, as can be seen in literature on racial interaction between students (McKinney, 2004, 2007) and a phenomenon like the language debate at Stellenbosch University. South Africa does not have a history of religious intolerance, like Israel for example; but due to Apartheid, language, specifically Afrikaans, and race are closely linked (McKinney, 2007). This might explain why participants reported that race and language were the most contentious issues.

Thus, opportunities to interact across boundaries existed, but still not that many students used it (McKinney, 2004, 2007), even in lecture halls where more than one disciplines are present. Students still struggled with difference. However, it might be essential that students are actually encouraged to interact on a deeper level, to gain a better understanding (Suleiman, 2004). This was what the CSI module aimed to address (Swartz, 2009). Participants' current environments showed that they needed preparation to deal with difference.

6.4 The perceived value of CSI

While participants' environments were very diverse in some aspects and less diverse in others, participants were very confident about their ability to deal with difference, as can be seen in Figure 5.3. Again, they reported the most confidence in dealing with age as well as gender difference, showing that while these were present, they were also not a problem. Age has an influence on interprofessional group dynamics (Clarke et al., 2007), but the more mature team members can have a very positive effect (Curran et al., 2008). Confidence in dealing with age was not mentioned specifically in the qualitative responses.

There were a few participants who reported struggling with some aspects of difference, specifically discipline, language and race. However, overall, they were generally positive about their confidence in dealing with all difference. It appears as if the CSI module might have influenced their self-confidence in dealing with these differences. Several participants also mentioned in the qualitative section that they have gained new self-confidence as a result of the module.

Figure 5.4 illustrated how participants viewed the effects of the module. Most participants did not feel that the module had an effect on their ability to deal with age and gender. Since the module did not focus on

either aspect specifically and the majority of the students were younger and female, one would expect that it did not have a great effect on either aspect. Table 5.5 confirms this, with the majority of students reporting that it did not change their perception of collaboration across age or gender.

Participants reported that their opinion of collaboration across discipline and institution did change as a result of the CSI module. They also ranked these two aspects highest in the question regarding all the aspects' comparative improvements (see Figure 5.5). For many participants this was also their first opportunity of collaboration between different institutions and disciplines. The inter-institutional and interdisciplinary nature of the CSI module was also one of its unique characteristics (Bozalek et al., 2007; Rohleder, Swartz, Bozalek, et al., 2008).

Students wrote that they appreciated learning how the three different disciplines can complement each other and work together. It was one of the newly acquired skills that they cherished and part of the knowledge that they felt served them well. They realised the value of such teamwork, which is generally an outcome of interprofessional education (Lidskog et al., 2008).

Religion as aspect of difference was rated unexpectedly. About half of the participants reported that their perception of collaboration across religious difference changed as a result of the module. However, it was ranked as the aspect that improved the least, overall. According to Figure 5.4, some participants felt that the module had no effect on their ability to deal effectively with difference, but others felt it had added to their ability to deal with difference. Clearly, some participants gained some skill in dealing with religious diversity from the CSI module. It might be that these participants came to some new awareness regarding dealing with aspects of religious difference.

Race and language were seen as the most challenging aspects of difference, apart from being the most contentious issue in participants' current environment. Close to half of the participants reported that the CSI module changed their perception of collaboration across language and race, even though only one participant reported that it was their first experience of collaboration across these aspects of difference. Participants rated themselves as able to deal with these aspects, although compared to the other aspects, these two received the lowest ratings. Thus, while race and language remain difficult, the CSI module changed some participants' perceptions, even though it was not their first experience of such collaboration. In fact, it improved an average amount compared to the other aspects.

Students reported greater awareness of difference, racial difference included. One participant specifically mentioned that she became aware of her own racism. They did not refer to language in their qualitative answers. Participants probably perceived difference in terms of language as difficult because of South Africa's Apartheid history, with language difference going along racial lines. The contention in the language debate at Stellenbosch University also attests to difficulty of language. In addition communication between any two people can be challenging. It is even more difficult if one or both of the speakers are not very comfortable in the language they have in common. Language is also an expression of identity (Halabi & Zak, 2004).

While participants still experienced racial difference as difficult, like McKinney (2007) also found, it was positive to hear that some participants gained understanding and greater confidence in dealing with racial difference. Some even managed to have meaningful discussion in their groups on issues like race and the past. These participants were optimistic about the interaction with other students, describing it as meaningful and connecting. In some groups, they could create a safe space where the students could engage in difficult and significant topics (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004). Not all the participants' groups achieved this. Unfortunately, some felt threatened in their groups. However, it is expected to be challenging, even after the completion of courses that address multicultural issues (Liu et al., 2004), as the CSI module did. Democratic dialogue is difficult (Boler, 2005).

Participants also reported that they valued the interaction with the other students immensely. Apart from the specific skills with relation to the dimensions of difference that they gained, they also reported that the interaction opened their minds and reduced their stereotypes. It appears as if the interaction during the CSI module satisfied the requirements for proper contact, according to the contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998) as it reduced stereotyping.

Overall, participants felt that the module was of more value for some aspects of difference than for others. It achieved its goal in the sense that participants reported that they could deal better with collaboration across institution and discipline.

6.5 Participants' perceptions

Forcing one to come out of the comfort zones, and taking on new challenges. The interaction and sharing of knowledge and experiences was really awesome. (F, C, Eng, PSY, 08, 11)

This participant summarised her experiences well. Many of the participants experienced it as a challenge that was "really awesome" in the end. From participants' responses four themes emerged, namely gaining knowledge and skills, acquiring understanding, interaction and differences and commonalities.

The participants mentioned a wide array of skills they mastered as a result of the course. These included interpersonal skills like presentation skills, group work and communication skills, managing objective (and difficult) discussion and dealing with diversity effectively. Some participants stated that they learnt practical skills like internet and computer skills and participatory action research. In addition, they also made some personal gains such as self-knowledge, self-awareness, an increased awareness and understanding of difference and its related controversies, openness towards diversity and the confidence to approach it. The participants generally valued the module as a learning experience that was hands-on and very practical instead of only theoretical; the concrete link between theory and practice. Apart from the valued skills they had gained and the group work, they also cherished the personal growth and insight that came with the module.

Of the 23 participants, 20 reported that the module changed their perception of the concept community and 21 participants responded that their view of their identity was expanded thanks to the module. This is another tangible indication of the value of the module. From participants' responses it was clear that their definitions of community and identity had deepened. They clearly rejected simplistic views of community and identity, opting for more expanded and all-encompassing definitions (Zembylas, 2008a).

The intricacies of identity emerged from participants' responses. One participant said she realised she might have more in common with people from a "different" group than her "own", but that it would not shake her identity. Participants became aware of their identities' flexibility. This flexibility enabled them to work in different environments, adjusting to it as necessary (Chrysoschoou, 2008). This was part of the approach where the professional needs to be certain of his or her identity, in order to understand difference and serve the client adequately (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004).

Participants further became aware that they have to know themselves, before they can help others. They summed it up by saying that if you know yourself, you have the ability to identify with others. Participants realised that self-reflection is valuable. It also helped with understanding clients.

They reported greater understanding and an ability to identify with others, treating them with respect. It also led to new insight into the relationship between the disciplines (and others from any different groups). A psychology student remarked that she no longer thought psychology was better than or superior to social work or occupational therapy. This is typical of the hierarchy that exists between disciplines (and across other aspects of difference) that interprofessional education is opposing (Curran et al., 2008; Payler et al., 2008). This hierarchy is also contrary to the principles of social justice (Freire, 2000) and leads to domination. Fortunately, this particular participant became aware of her impression, the implications of it, and the true interdependent nature and she adjusted her impression.

This awareness of emotion is part of what Zembylas (2008a) calls critical emotional reflexivity. As part of critical pedagogy, it requires of individuals to scrutinise themselves for dominant values or assumptions present in their emotions, lives or thoughts (Zembylas, 2008a). With this careful examination, individuals can identify unconscious privilege and domination. Critical emotional reflexivity is an invaluable process to build a more equitable society. It is more than just awareness of oppression; it calls for critical reflection and attention to emotions. As this participant described the notion she had about the hierarchy of professions: after she became aware of it, she could transform it.

Participants also appreciated the opportunity to reflect, about their own identity, as well as difference. According to Freire (2000), reflection is an essential part of transformation of society. It is how people become aware of injustice and realise they have to combat it. Thus, the process that happened in that participant can be called conscientisation (Freire, 2000).

Apart from the knowledge and the understanding gained, the participants frequently referred to the interaction opportunities between the different people and what that meant to them. They said it broadened

their views and furthered the learning. By interacting, participants got a better understanding of how to interact with others.

Participants said that it was from the interaction in their groups that they grew and learned skills to deal effectively with diversity. It was also what made the CSI such a fun and social module. Some felt that they wanted more face-to-face contact, instead of web mediated contact, but this might change over time as people become more used to contact via technology.

The other theme identified was that of the “us” and “them”, with a focus on difference. Participants often referred to their own discipline, university, culture and people as opposed to different disciplines, a different university, different culture or different people. There was an increased awareness of difference, with the word “different” appearing frequently.

For some participants their new awareness of difference was positive, especially in the case where it alerted them to their own prejudices and facilitated care and service delivery for the better. In this case, Zembylas’s (2008a) critical emotional reflexivity is essential to become cognisant of these prejudices.

While their definitions of community changed for 20 of the 23 participants, they still tended to think in terms of different groups. Fortunately, with the broadened or expanded definition (like five participants mentioned) there is room for multiple community memberships, like the intersectionality of identity (Davis, 2008). Borders are more porous and the “us” and “them” are more fluid and accommodating and less excluding. If people saw themselves as part of many communities, chances were better that two people would at least have one community in common, even if group-thought seems slightly forced, according to their answers.

This was also the case in the module, where participants frequently referred to the greater group of health professionals. The group was created and emphasised to inspire camaraderie. Participants also kept on looking for the common ground. Phrases like “like-minded people” and the “different helping disciplines” from participants’ responses showed this search and emphasis. In this way the professional identity was enforced, for “us health professionals”. While it is a real and valid marker of identity, it can be enforced in an artificial way, to gloss over difference (Applebaum, 2008).

Subsequently there were two tendencies at once. On the one hand, participants referred to difference the whole time, including different people and different communities, but seldom naming the difference. On the other hand, participants emphasised these general, common identities as well, as Rohleder et al. (2007) also found. Too strong reliance on either of these group identities could result in stereotyping (Suleiman, 2004).

One participant felt the module was missing a follow-up opportunity. This participant suggested that if there were chances to meet after the marks were finished, it would build more social relations between the students and foster more honest open dialogue. Rohleder et al. (2007) also reported this from the first year the CSI project was run. The group that they formed to compile that article offered such an opportunity to them.

Not all the participants experienced the module that positively, though. Two participants indicated that they would not recommend the module to other students. While only one reported that it was neither positive nor negative, the other reported that it was both positive and negative, indicating that there was at least something positive in the module. The one participant could not remember the module very well. Memory can be a problem with follow-up research (Carpenter et al., 2007).

The other said that the module lacked structure and affected one's marks adversely, as the participant claimed that marking was not consistent. Some of the criticism was also aimed at the facilitator. This participant felt the course could have been structured better. These two students did not seem to have a meaningful experience, but were rather frustrated by the process. The process of confrontation with the other and the ensuing democratic dialogue is difficult (Burbules, 2005).

Other participants were very positive about the facilitators, although one other participant mentioned that the facilitators were not that diverse racially. Another said that their facilitator did not spend much time with their group and the particular participant felt threatened during some of their group conversations. Because the facilitators play such a vital role with interprofessional education, they have to be trained well and the module structured well, to ensure that it is successful (Davys, et al., 2009).

The participants were also very positive about the guest speakers, with many mentioning them specifically. These guest speakers spoke from their personal experience. While personal experience is not always a valid source (Applebaum, 2008; Laubscher & Powell, 2003) in democratic dialogue, the guest speakers were well chosen and the students appreciated their open honesty immensely. Participants were inspired to reflect on their own lives (Zembylas, 2008a).

Many participants felt that the course was too short, too full and too rushed. They also said the workload was very high, on the students and the facilitators. In the interprofessional education literature there is also uncertainty about how long would be an adequate duration for a module (Payler et al., 2008; Salvatori et al., 2007). Further, there is the problem with scheduling the interprofessional course and accommodating it into the different study programmes' timetables (Clarke et al., 2007; Lidskog et al., 2008). Naturally, this would also influence the course duration.

In summarising, the participants' perspective had four themes that emerged from their responses: gaining knowledge, gaining understanding, interaction and difference and commonalities. This section also described other things that made up participants' experience. Not all participants had a positive experience and while some participants did not feel their facilitators fulfilled their role, others were very positive about their group facilitators. For many participants the guest speakers were the highlight that stood out in their memory. A number of participants also felt that the module as too short and wanted the module to be longer than just a term.

6.6 Limitations

The main limitation to this evaluation study was the very low response rate. The participants that did respond were generally very positive about the module and what they learned. Unfortunately, due to the low response rate, the results have to be generalised with caution.

Related to the challenge of obtaining a reasonable response rate, was the challenge of reaching and contacting the participants. While this is a general problem for longitudinal and follow-up studies, in this case there were particular challenges.

6.6.1 Response rate

With a total population of 282 and 23 participants in the sample, the response rate could be calculated as 8%. This is very low and limits generalisability.

However, according to Smith (2002), there are very few clear-cut standards to determine response rate, quoting some studies with response rates of 99% or research protocols that do not even include guidelines for reasonable response rates. Vehovar et al. (2002) suggest that response rate for web surveys should not be calculated with the entire population, but rather from the number of informed units. These are individuals who receive the email soliciting participation in the web survey. Between the population and the informed units are all the individuals whose email addresses were not working, individuals who do not have email addresses (anymore) and the individuals whose email addresses were captured incorrectly in the database (Vehovar et al., 2002). From the informed units, a smaller percentage notices the email message, with few following the link and even fewer completing the survey. It might not be sensible to use the total population to calculate the response rate, if a substantial number of people in the population did not have email addresses.

When a test email was sent to all the participants, 62 were no longer valid at all. One of these was not a student email address, but a new work-related email address. This address must have been captured or copied incorrectly. Thus, this reduces the informed units to 220 at most, of which 23 is 10%.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine how many of the 220 emails actually reached the intended email inbox or how many of these informed units noticed the invitation email lying there. It was also not possible to determine how many individuals opened the webpage but decided against participating. It might be better for future studies to send out a basic email with very little information, requiring participants to go to the survey. If the potential participants have read about the study, they can then choose to complete it or opt out, so that researchers can have an idea how many choose against participating after they read what the study is about.

To maximise response rate, participants were reminded about the study weekly for about two months. However, multiple reminders to participants can also be problematic as Krosnick (1999) found that the more

a population of participants are pursued, the less representative the sample becomes, because certain types of people might be over-represented. Vehovar et al. (2002) describes a second wave of response among participants that occurs a little later and includes participants that do not often participate in research studies. On the other hand, participants who feel harassed will refuse to respond (Moore & Tarnai, 2002).

Two similar studies that were recently done, using a web based survey, also reported low response rates. Garber, Madigan, Click and Fitzpatrick (2009) sent invitations to different health professionals (nurses, physicians and residents) in an organisation that is involved at university hospitals across six sites. They researched attitudes and collaboration between the different professionals. They had a response rate of 16%, 14% and 10% for the three different groups. Reasons for their low response rate were organisational restructuring and concurrent data collection initiatives that were taking place (Garber et al., 2009).

Their participants were all working for a single organisation and all the email addresses could be obtained. They also determined that 90% of the population had reasonable internet access (Garber et al., 2009). In this current study, participants were employed by different employers. Another important factor is that it was not possible to establish what percentage of the population had any internet access in this study.

This survey was also designed in such a way that it was not possible for participants to leave items out. Thus participants who did not complete all the items on a page, could not progress to the following page. This might have caused a number of attempted, but incomplete, responses, but which could not be documented. This might also have influenced the reported response rate.

Louw, Brown, Miller and Soudien (2009) did a survey among academics in the social sciences at eight South African universities to enquire after their use of information and computer technologies in their teaching. While their overall response rate was 19%, with some sites having up to 70% response rates, other sites have a response rate of only 7% or 8%. Again, all the participants were in organisational structures and, although not mentioned, it is assumed that their participants had reasonable internet access, since they were all employed by universities. Louw et al. (2009) identified key informants at each site that also acted as drivers for the process of data collection, which improved the response rates. This study also had someone other than the main researcher who tried to contact the former students via telephone to encourage them to participate, but that was not very successful either.

For this study, the population was widely spread, employed at different organisations, with some working in rural areas. It was not possible to determine their level of internet access before the study. In addition, it was also not possible to obtain their email addresses.

6.6.2 Pursuit of the participant

This study encountered quite a few obstacles concerning participants. This section describes some of the obstacles, including contacting participants, participant's internet access, migration of participants as well as their willingness, and gives some comments on the quality of pursued participants' responses. I will

conclude with suggestions for others who wish to embark on longitudinal, follow-up or web assisted research in South Africa.

An internet questionnaire was chosen, partly because the module also had a web based component, but also to eliminate problems with location, to enable participants to complete it at a time that they found convenient and to avoid using timely and unreliable postal service (Cox, 1996). However, with the choice of an internet questionnaire, other challenges arose.

It started when students completed the module and their contact information was not gathered with this study in mind. The information of the students included their cellular phone numbers and their university email addresses. These were gathered from the respective departments. It presented a problem in contacting participants, because one to three years later, after students had graduated, when the follow-up study was conducted, most of the numbers were no longer in use. People can easily get new cellular numbers and many often do so. It also became apparent that many participants had multiple numbers and more than one phone. This meant that calling them on the right number at the time that they have a specific SIM card in the phone that they have with them and are able to take the call, seemed like the luck of the draw. Thus, contacting participants by their cellular number collected at the time of the module might not be viable because the number is no longer in use and researchers might need other means to contact and recruit participants.

These other means used included email addresses. Unfortunately, no students gave other email addresses than their university email addresses. After their studies ended, students no longer had access to it and the email accounts were terminated. The email addresses that the researchers did have were obtained from participants who could still be reached on their cellular number or those of the participants that were still studying. The students made up 39% of the sample. Thus, obtaining the right, active email address, to which researchers can send the email with a link to the questionnaire, was problematic. In addition, it cannot be assumed that participants have email addresses.

Apart from departmental records, contact details of participants may be gathered from other sources. After graduation, some universities' alumni networks attempt to gather as much contact information of their graduates as possible, albeit with mixed results. Clarke et al. (2007) used this as their source of contact information for their study. There are also professional boards or associations that may be useful in obtaining their members' contact details. However, with both mentioned options, difficulties with cooperation between different institutions and associations as well as problems regarding the confidentiality of their members arise. In an era where personal contact information is valuable to advertisers and being exploited in various ways, associations have to be wary of making their members' information available. Individuals should also practice caution with their own personal information.

Therefore, the problems of contact information would best be remedied by obtaining more elaborate contact information of participants. This could include all the cellular numbers the participant has at that stage or the cellular numbers of two friends or relatives and an email address or two that is not hosted by their university

or even their current employer. Landline numbers do not change as often – provided people have landlines – and parents' or relatives' physical addresses might prove to be helpful too. Of course, these problems are characteristic of the age group and life stage of the participants. While students are generally very accessible while enrolled for university study, people who have recently completed their studies are not so.

Thus, the first step in successfully pursuing participants for a follow-up study would be to collect a variety of contact information, including all possible modes of contact as well as more long-term contact information. Social networking sites, like Facebook, LinkedIn and others, could also be promising tools, provided the module coordinators encourage participants to make use (of a specific one) of these websites.

Apart from contact details, access to computers and the internet was another problem. From this study, it seemed that some of the participants that could be reached by phone and had an email address, did not have sufficient internet access to complete the online survey. This included a computer on which to complete it, belonging to the participant or a friend or relative, as well as the 20 minutes' time that the questionnaire would take. Of course, the said computer would also need a reliable internet connection, with a reasonable download speed.

Another aspect that deserves attention is the fact that most of the email addresses – that were not university addresses – were that of companies, implying that participants might only have access to their employers' computers, on which they might not be able or allowed to complete the survey. It may be asking a bit too much to expect participants to complete a survey in an internet café, where internet access can be relatively expensive. In addition, while there may be internet cafés in urban areas, this is not necessarily the case in the more rural parts of South Africa. If there are too many obstacles and inconvenience of participation is too much, response rates can be low (Moore & Tarnai, 2002; Vehovar et al., 2002).

Since this current study was part of a greater follow-up evaluation, that includes qualitative interviews and an online forum, the research team wanted to contact all the students to invite them to participate in the research. It was challenging to contact the participants, as will be explained in the next section. In a sample of 46 students that could be contacted, 15 did not have an email address, thus almost 33%. All the psychology students in this sample gave email addresses but few of the occupational therapy and social work students gave email addresses (or had email addresses to give). Unfortunately, this was only established towards the end of the study.

It could not be assumed that these recently graduated professionals would have internet access that is reliable and convenient. In a few years' time, it may be the case that everyone has reliable, affordable internet access. Thus, when researchers consider doing internet research, they should remember that South Africa does not yet have internet access equivalent to Europe and the USA, where internet surveys have successfully been conducted for a number of years (Birnbaum, 2000; Cooner, 2005; Garber et al., 2009). Internet access even presented a problem during the CSI course (Rohleder, Bozalek, et al., 2008).

One of the reasons for choosing an internet questionnaire was the migration of recent graduates. Often, they get placements in rural areas or they may go abroad to gain experience and earn more money to repay their student debt. This migration makes it harder to locate or contact them, due to new contact information and/or insufficient internet access. It also happens that they lose contact with classmates, who may have been a source of contact information. While parents and networks could be useful, researchers would first need to obtain that information as well.

Regarding response rates, a certain percentage of participants who receive any kind of invitation to participate in research, would choose not to. The onus always rests on the participant as to whether he or she chooses to participate or not. Some participants that have been pursued repeatedly may still choose not to fill in the questionnaire or follow the email link or participate in the research interview.

Another issue that researchers should consider is the quality of data gathered from a participant who feels that the researchers have been too adamant in their pursuit. Although this is mostly true for qualitative research, where researchers rely on rich data for analysis (Mertens, 1998), it is also relevant for quantitative questionnaires that participants fill out on their own. They might be in a hurry, not interested enough to take the questionnaire seriously or simply complete the questionnaire to satisfy the researchers. It begs the question how valid and reliable data gathered in such a manner could be.

Follow-up studies present fundamental problems of contacting participants due to changed contact details. This could be remedied by obtaining detailed contact information from participants, if researchers think a follow-up study might be worthwhile. It should be detailed enough to counter the effect of recent graduates migrating to other parts of South Africa and the world. Researchers also need to keep in mind that the internet is still not that accessible to some demographic groups, including recent graduates. This may improve as mobile phones that can access the internet become more common, but then questionnaires need to be in a mobile-friendly format. Despite all the researchers' effort to locate potential participants, they may still refuse to participate or participate reluctantly, which may have implications for the quality of their responses.

This study had a low response rate, if the total population was compared with the size of the sample, but that might not be the best way to calculate the response rate. Researchers want samples to be representative of their population of study and use a response rate as a measure of how well the sample represents the population. However, if a significant percentage of the population did not know about the study or could not participate, the response rate might mean something else.

This study encountered numerous challenges with regards to reaching participants and the small sample size shows that. However, it appears other internet survey also have rather low response rates, even when implemented in existing structures, with reasonable internet access.

6.7 Reflexivity

Since I was also a CSI student, I had to be cautious not to let my opinion influence the study. I realised it already had, in the choice of research instrument, for example. Only recently, after data had been collected, have I realised that the internet survey might not have been the best way to collect data on students' experience of the module.

The choice of a web based survey was made based on my limited experience at a university with ample internet access. Inadvertently, it excluded many participants from making a choice to participate in the study or not. If 33% of the students that were contacted did not give an email address, it begs the question how many of those who could not be reached, had email addresses. To create an email account does not usually cost anything, but to access it and do so regularly, can be expensive, as it requires access to a computer and the internet. The assumption that the recent graduates would all have email addresses was wrong.

My personal opinion of the CSI module was very positive. When I started this study I hoped to prove what a wonderful module it was, so that more initiatives like this could be implemented. Fortunately, this opinion was changed after an encounter with another CSI student.

In an informal personal conversation, this CSI student told me that they did not draw and describe their own community accurately and honestly, out of fear of judgement from fellow group members. This person reckoned that in order to preserve group relations and promote future cooperation in the group, it was better not to share openly. In this participant's case, it was their family's wealth and social class that was omitted.

However, this might be true for other participants as well: participants who chose to omit certain details because of a fear of feeling threatened, guilty or ashamed (Rohleder et al., 2007). This case cast light on the fact that others might also have omitted parts of their identity and affiliations that others might disapprove of, for the sake of harmonious group relations and better marks for the module. This begs the question: how honest are South Africans in their day-to-day encounters with others, and what are the implications of their dishonesty? Such pretence cannot be healthy (Zembylas, 2008b).

The CSI module only looked at sexual orientation as part of the broad array of "differences", but that can also be something that a student might have been reluctant to share. One might ask why someone would want to share their sexual orientation, since it does not have anything to do with the interdisciplinary workgroup. However, such an attitude is exactly like the discrimination Mayo (2005) describes where individuals have to keep their homosexuality a secret because their colleagues (or fellow-soldiers, in the case of the military) do not want to know about it. In the workgroups, students shared personal information about their history and identity, and if a person had to ponder sharing their sexual orientation, as one student reported doing (Rohleder et al., 2007), the groups might not have been as safe as the researchers and facilitators thought. One participant mentioned feeling threatened in their group, in the qualitative responses of this questionnaire. This also relates to challenges of democratic dialogue (Boler, 2005) and whether

someone racist or someone of a particular religion, for example, should be frank about their opinions or affiliations if it might offend or hurt someone in the group.

This student, with whom I had the conversation, also mentioned great dissatisfaction with their group's facilitator.

Facilitators are very important to group dynamics, experiences and processes (Halabi, 2004). They have a marked effect on how the members of a group experience the group and the greater program. While this student expressed discontent at their group facilitator, many other students reported in the questionnaire that they had excellent facilitators.

I detected a reluctance to mention that there was praise for the facilitators, while compiling the analysed data. On deeper self-examination, I remembered that my main written piece was misplaced between the web platform difficulties, extended deadlines because of these difficulties and my group facilitator. I received an incomplete grade because the essay's grade was outstanding, even though I submitted my essay. After some emails and enquiries, the essay was found and graded and the problem was resolved. I had completely forgotten about the incident. Mistakes like these happen. In fact, I venture to guess that all students experience at least one such situation during their studies. However, it influenced my opinion of some of the facilitators slightly and without this realisation and the awareness of it, might have led to a misrepresentation of the data. This shows the importance of reflexivity, especially in research with a qualitative aspect (Krippendorff, 2004).

Qualitative data is susceptible to influences and biases of the researchers. Therefore, it is important that qualitative researchers reflect on the data, the study and their influence in it. Similar to Zembylas's (2008a) critical emotional reflexivity, it brings subtle influences to the front, so that it can be addressed.

The conversation with the other CSI student made me realise that I have to put my experience of the CSI module aside. It made me aware that all the groups might not have been the safe spaces they were thought to be and that the facilitators have a very important but difficult role.

6.8 Conclusion

Difference has serious historical violence, discrimination and domination attached to it (Glass, 2005). Society needs to be transformed to right this situation, and the way Freire (2000) suggests this be done, is through education.

Social justice education asks of the educators to impart their students with a mindset that cannot stand injustice or oppression (Dennis & Hemson, 2007; Quin, 2009; Zembylas, 2008a), but feels compelled to change it. Health professionals have a role in the promotion of justice, to achieve liberation, as wellness and justice are intricately linked (Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007). However, first the professionals need to be comfortable with difference themselves, before they can be agents for change (Dennis & Hemson, 2007).

The CSI module attempted to change participants' perceptions of community, self and identity to enable them to transcend the boundaries of difference (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, et al., 2008). It was an opportunity to engage in dialogue across all the aspects of difference (Rohleder et al., 2007) and while they felt that it did not reduce prejudice, they still reported that the CSI module created awareness of these issues. It is clear that democratic dialogue across difference is fraught with difficulty (Burbules, 2005; McKinney, 2004). During the module there were no distinctions between the aspects of difference (Leibowitz et al., 2007), although some are more easy to converse about (Swartz et al., 2009).

This study set out to determine if students felt the module was effective and useful, a few years later, similar to what Hansen (2006) hoped for. Participants were asked about their experience of the module, its strengths and weaknesses and whether it changed their perception of community and identity. They were also asked about their current environment, to get an indication of whether they use the acquired skills or feel they are necessary, as well as their feelings of self-confidence in dealing with the various aspects of difference used in the study.

While CSI was not participants' first experience of courses across difference, many responded that it changed their view of collaboration across the various aspects of difference. They described their current environments as fairly diverse, with race and language being the most contentious issues, but there were almost no reference to either in the qualitative section. They rather referred to difference in general. They reported that the module made the greatest difference in their ability to deal effectively with different disciplines and institutions, aspects that were generally not addressed by other previous courses. In general, participants indicated that they felt quite confident about dealing with difference, with some rating language as the aspect they struggle most with.

The participants of this study were mostly positive about the module. With the exception of two, all the participants said they would definitely recommend the module to other students. From their answers, it was clear that they were eager to mention the skills and knowledge they had gained through the CSI module. This included personal, practical and interpersonal skills. Participants also mentioned the understanding of difference and related issues they had gained from their participation. They valued the opportunity for interaction that the CSI module offered. There was also a tendency among participants to refer to "different" in general and quite frequently, not mentioning any specific characteristic of difference, but frequently mentioning a short string of aspects, like "race, age and religion" for example. Participants also frequently referred to the commonalities between the different participants (Rohleder et al., 2007).

Race was mentioned quite often, but few participants appeared to have dissected and interrogated the concept, as most mentioned it as an aside. Many reported that language was also a contentious issue, but that might have more to do with language skill, with misunderstandings or broken communication that follow, than difference as such. Language was hardly mentioned in the qualitative section.

Participants did report that their perception of community has changed as a result of the module. Only two or three claimed that it did not. With this changed perception, participants report greater insight and understanding of others.

6.9 The way forward

The CSI module definitely made a difference in its students' lives. The way they recommended it confirms that. Unfortunately, it is not possible to know exactly how much of participants' actions really changed, with their reported changed perceptions. Boler (2005) tells of a white student, who attended a course on tolerance but did not appear to change his ways. However, a few years later he returned to tell his educator how he had changed. While it might appear as if the course did not reach all the students initially, later their opinions might change. Hansen (2006) also mentions how he hopes that the students of the course he witnessed will remember what they learned later in their lives.

If students' perceptions are really transformed, it will show in their actions (Freire, 2000). Unfortunately, the existing social structures continue to influence social justice work and while students' attitudes and actions change, these structures will carry on leaving their mark (Dennis & Hemson, 2007), countering the transforming work done. This is why Zembylas (2008a) appeals for critical emotional reflexivity, to keep watch and become aware of dominating attitudes and practices.

Participants suggested expanding the module to include students from both universities' psychology, social work and occupational therapy departments. That might lead to more comparisons between groups and institutions and might place even more emphasis on racial and class differences.

This study had a low response rate. It was not a good representation of the total population of CSI students, as it became apparent that many of them could not be reached and probably did not have internet access. However, this sample was reasonably representative for the sub-population of participants that do have internet access, with participants from all the years and demographic categories. Determining ways to sample the rest of this population, including contacting them and getting their responses, would be very useful. A combination of data-collection methods might be more effective in getting more responses.

While more than half of the participants were working, four of them, all psychology students, reported that they were working in a different field. This is probably because a four-year social work or occupational therapy qualification allows one to register and practice, but the psychology honours degree does not. It might be interesting to do such a study after a longer time has elapsed. Carpenter et al. (2007) did their evaluation after ten years. However, as contacting participants was already problematic, it is expected that it will be even more difficult later on.

Since South African society is changing, it would be very interesting to repeat a project like CSI in the future, if only to see what ways society has changed in terms of issues surrounding difference.

In a few years' time, technology will also have improved, which might cause fewer problems with the presentation of the module (Rohleder, Bozalek, et al., 2008). It might also improve and simplify contacting the students for follow-up studies. Social networks, like Facebook, have expanded a lot during the past two years. More and more mobile phones can also access the internet, which would also have an influence on how the module is presented, experienced and evaluated later.

6.10 Summary

This final chapter integrated the results and findings of the study. The implications for future studies as well as the study's limitations were also discussed.

No participants reported that they could not remember the module at all or had a purely negative experience of the module. This general information was used to determine whether any year's presentation of the module differed significantly from the others. This was not the case. It appeared as if the three years were more or less the same.

Participants reported that the CSI module changed their views of many aspects of difference, even though it was not their first encounter across difference. Their environments were rather diverse, especially in terms of age and gender, although these aspects of difference were of the least contentious issues in their environments. Race and language were more difficult, probably because of the country's history. Thus, there is a need for education that equips students to deal with difference.

Despite their diverse environments, participants still felt relatively self-confident about their ability to deal with the various aspects of difference. They reported that the CSI module made the greatest impact on their ability to deal effectively with different disciplines and institutions, but also changed their perceptions regarding working across language and race.

Responses to the qualitative section showed four themes, namely knowledge gained, understanding obtained, valued interaction and difference and commonalities. Participants were very proud of the variety of skills and knowledge and the deepened understanding that they got from the module. This knowledge and understanding developed through the interaction with the other students. In their responses, participants frequently referred to difference, but on the other hand, they also focussed on what all had in common, like being health professionals.

This study's biggest limitation is the fact so few students responded to the invitation to participate. The main reasons for this were that many did not have email addresses and that it was very difficult to obtain contact information for the students.

Since I also completed the CSI module, it was essential to reflect critically, ensuring that the results and findings were not biased. A conversation with another CSI student who had a very negative experience and disliked their group's facilitator helped me with that. It created questions regarding the safe space in

dialogues. This reflexivity also brought up the issue that this study was not accessible to all, due to the web based methodology.

The conclusion in this chapter summarised the entire study and its important findings. Participants' opinions of community and identity changed, owing to the CSI module. As most participants reported that they would recommend the module, it appears that although the module was difficult, the participants found it worthwhile.

This chapter concluded with suggestions for the way forward. Finding ways to ensure all students have the choice to participate is very important for the future. Participants also requested that the module be presented again and implemented more widely. New technologies will probably simplify the course presentation as well as tracking of students and data collection for coming studies. As society changes, the CSI module might look different, addressing new issues as well as some old ones.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear Participant

My name is Mari Hugo. I am currently doing a Masters degree in Psychology at Stellenbosch University under the supervision of Dr Ronelle Carolissen, who is one of the Community, Self and Identity (CSI) module designers and facilitators.

You might remember the CSI module from your fourth year of study (for UWC students) or psychology honours (for SU students), which included workshops at the two universities and online workgroups. Since it was a new course, it is necessary to evaluate it thoroughly. When you completed the course, you filled out evaluation forms, but to assess the full impact of the course we are conducting a longer-term evaluation. This is why I am contacting you. By completing this questionnaire you will help us improve the education of health work students.

I would appreciate your assistance in completing this questionnaire, which will take approximately 40 minutes to complete.

All information will be treated as strictly confidential and your anonymity will be ensured. After completion of the questionnaire, all participants will have the option of entering a draw for two R250 Pick and Pay vouchers. The contact details that participants furnish will in no way be linked to their specific responses and will only be used to contact the two people who won the draw. The current questionnaire will be administered to all students who participated in the CSI module taken during 2006, 2007, and 2008 at UWC and US.

By completing the questionnaire, you consent to taking part in this study. You further acknowledge that you are in no way forced to complete this study and have been assured that your anonymity and confidentiality will be protected. The contact details that you provide will be used only to contact you if you should win the draw for the incentive voucher offered in this study.

Please complete the questionnaire to the best of your ability, dedicating enough time to each question. Please use a black or blue pen and write legibly. You can then fax the completed questionnaire back to 021 886 4142.

Thank you for your participation.

If you have any questions or queries, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards,
Mari Hugo
mhugo@sun.ac.za
083 566 3831

Supervisor: Dr RL Carolissen
rlc2@sun.ac.za
0833035022

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

CSI Follow-up Questionnaire

Demographic information

* Age

* Gender

	Female
	Male

* Race/Ethnicity

	Black
	Coloured
	Indian
	White

* Home language

	Afrikaans
	English
	isiXhosa
	Other (please specify)

* Degree course enrolled for during CSI module

	Occupational Therapy
	Psychology
	Social work

* Year in which you completed CSI module

* Mark (%) achieved for the CSI module If you cannot remember your exact mark, you can fill in an estimate.

* Mark (%) achieved overall, for the year you completed the CSI module If you cannot remember your exact mark, you can fill in an estimate.

* What are you currently doing?

	Studying
	Working in a different field
	Working in the field you studied, e.g. OT/Psych/SW
	Unemployed

Depending on your answer in the previous question, please answer the applicable question:

(only for this page)

*** What course or degree you are currently studying for?**

Please fill in the name and institution you are doing the course at

*** In what field are you currently employed? Please describe your current work and field of employment**

*** What is your current employment? Please describe your current work and position**

*** Were you employed since the CSI module? Please name your previous employments**

The course

*** Do you remember the CSI module from the fourth year of your studies?**

	Clearly and vividly
	Vaguely
	Not at all

*** How would you have described your experience of the module, shortly after its completion?**

Positive
Negative
Both
Neither

*** Which part(s) stand out in your memory of the module?**

*** What did you learn in the module, i.e. specific skills or knowledge?**

*** Did this module change your perception of the concept of community? If yes, how did it change? If no, what is your current conception of community?**

*** Did this module expand your own view of your identity?** If yes, how did it expand this view? If no, what do you think prevented the module from providing this opportunity for expansion for you?

*** Was this your first experience of cooperation across different...**

	Yes	No
ages?		
disciplines?		
genders?		
institutions?		
languages?		
racess?		
religions?		

*** Did the module change your perception of collaborating with others who differ from you in terms of...**

	Yes	No
ages?		
disciplines?		
genders?		
institutions?		
languages?		
racess?		
religions?		

Your current environment

This can include your working, studying or general environment, depending on your current circumstances.

*** Would you describe your current environment as diverse in terms of ...**

	Very diverse				Not diverse at all
	1	2	3	4	5
age?					
discipline?					
gender?					
institution?					
language?					
race?					
religion?					

*** Please rank the following aspects of diversity according to the measure in which it is a contentious issue (or the cause of tension or conflict) in your current environment. For this question RANKING of these different aspects of diversity is required. Every number/column can only be used once.**

	Most important issue						Least important issue
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Age							
Discipline							
Gender							
Institution							
Language							
Race							
Religion							

*** How would you rate your ability to deal with the following aspects of diversity?**

	Not good at dealing with it				Excellent at dealing with it
	1	2	3	4	5
Age					
Discipline					
Gender					
Institution					
Language					
Race					
Religion					

*** How much did the CSI module add to your current ability to cope with each of these aspects of diversity?**

	Greatly added		No effect		Hindered
	1	2	3	4	5
Age					
Discipline					
Gender					
Institution					
Language					
Race					
Religion					

*** The CSI module made the biggest improvement in your ability to cope with which aspect of diversity?** For this question **RANKING** of these different aspects of diversity is required. Every number/column can only be used once

	Most improved						Least improved
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Different ages							
Different disciplines							
Different genders							
Different institutions							
Different languages							
Different races							
Different religions							

*** Has your opinion of the CSI module's value (if any) changed since you have completed it?**
(please elaborate in what ways it changed as well as what gave rise to this change)

Retrospective opinion of CSI

Looking back, how would you evaluate CSI now?

* **Would you recommend the module to someone? Why?**

* **What weaknesses, if any, does the CSI module have?**

* **What merits, if any, does the CSI module have?**

* **What is the most important thing that you learned in the CSI module?**

Thank you for taking this survey.

If you wish to be entered in the lucky draw for 2 vouchers from Pick 'n Pay, worth R250 each,
please copy

this URL <https://surveys.sun.ac.za/Survey.aspx?s=8865e477a37d4565a1bad4c8538a997d>
in the web browser's Address Bar, to open a new window where you will be asked to enter your
contact details,
so that they will not be linked to your answers.

If you do not wish to be entered in the lucky draw, you can just close this window

Contact details

Name

Cellphone number

Email address

Are you be willing to be interviewed, to explore your experiences of the CSI module in more depth?

Yes

No

APPENDIX C: DATA TABLES

Data Table for Figure 5.1

Summary of participants' rating of the diversity of their current environment with regards to aspects of difference

Aspect of difference	Frequency					Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
Age	14	5	3	0	1	1.65
Discipline	7	7	6	2	1	2.26
Gender	8	3	6	5	1	2.48
Institution	5	2	3	6	7	3.35
Language	7	4	6	2	4	2.65
Race	10	5	2	5	1	2.22
Religion	11	2	7	2	1	2.13

Data Table for Figure 5.2

Summary of ranking of the measure that each of the various aspects are a contentious issue or source of conflict or tension in their current environment.

Aspect of difference	Frequency							Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Age	2	2	1	5	3	1	9	4.91
Discipline	2	1	4	7	4	4	1	4.13
Gender	1	4	6		5	4	3	4.22
Institution	1	1	6	5	3	3	4	4.43
Language	9	5	2	2	5	-		2.52
Race	5	9	1	2	1	4	1	3.04
Religion	3	1	3	2	2	7	5	4.74

Data Table for Figure 5.3

Participants' rating of their own ability to deal effectively with different aspects of diversity

Aspect of difference	Frequency					Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
Age	0	0	1	9	13	4.52
Discipline	1	2	5	10	5	3.7
Gender	0	0	2	11	10	4.35
Institution	0	3	4	10	6	3.83
Language	1	5	4	8	5	3.48
Race	1	3	4	8	7	3.74
Religion	1	0	4	9	9	4.09

Data Table for Figure 5.4

Participants' rating if the module added or hindered to their ability to deal effectively with diversity.

Aspect of difference	Frequency					Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
Age	3	5	15	-	-	2.52
Discipline	8	10	5	-	-	1.87
Gender	2	4	16	1	-	2.7
Institution	8	9	4	2	-	2
Language	3	10	9	1	-	2.35
Race	8	9	6	-	-	1.91
Religion	4	8	11	-	-	2.3

Data Table for Figure 5.5

Summary of the ranking how much coping with the aspects of diversity improved due to the CSI module.

Aspect of difference	Frequency							Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Age	3	2	3	2	1	6	6	4.65
Discipline	5	10	1	1	4	1	1	2.83
Gender	0	2	6	3	4	4	4	4.61
Institution	9	3	2	5	2	1	1	2.78
Language	1	1	6	5	7	1	2	4.17
Race	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	3.7
Religion	1	1	2	4	2	5	8	5.26